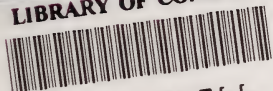


Reynard the Fox  
in English Verse by  
John Storer Lobb

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# REYNARD THE FOX

## AN EARLY APOLOGUE OF RENOWN

Clad in an English dress, fashioned according to the German model  
supplied by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe,

By

JOHN STORER COBB.

WITH CANTON'S ILLUSTRATIONS.

BOSTON

DAMRELL & UPHAM

The Old Corner Bookstore

1899



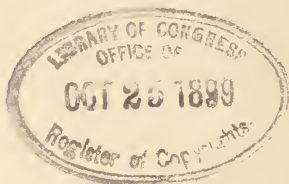
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Northampton, Mass.)

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## PREFACE.

Although so much in the way of commentary and criticism has been written about this renowned apologue, yet is its origin still enveloped in an apparently impenetrable fog. Many investigators, noted for learning and persevering research, have labored to clear this away; yet, with every new effort, the only result seems to be a further recession of the date of its birth. The probability of reliable discovery has vanished and naught seems left but to relegate it, as one painstaking enquirer has suggested, to prehistoric times.

By some it is regarded as unquestionably a European production; others look upon the fundamental stories as the common property of various Aryan branches of the human family, and as having been brought from their Asiatic homes by Teutonic migrants. It has certainly been traced back to the tenth century, and Jacob Grimm arrives at the

conclusion that it was then known under three forms, with the independent episodes in each so related as to furnish unmistakable hints of the groundwork of their later blending into one continuous narrative.

As with the date, so with the place, of its birth. We have no clear idea of where the narrative first saw the light or of the form in which it was brought into being. The claims of France, Germany, and the Netherlands have all been plausibly and forcibly advanced, and it has been likewise maintained that Latin ought to be regarded as the medium through which will be found the earliest account of the adventures of our famous Reynard. It seems, indeed, to have been demonstrated that the oldest extant version is in Latin, still the editor of that version has no apparent hesitation, after a very thorough investigation, in ascribing the origin of the poem to Flanders and in considering the material of the Flemish copy to be derived from some earlier source.

But, leaving these particulars as of secon-

dary importance, except as an impetus to the pleasures of antiquarian research, which are not to be despised, let us cast a glance at the substance of the famous beast-epic, as it has been aptly called. The motive of its inspiration is thought by some to have been satire. By these it is regarded as a satirical exposure of the foibles and vices of humanity, with a view to their improvement. There are others, however, who consider the romance as nothing but the expression of a general interest in animal life and habits, and as having no satirical basis or educational purpose. With our meagre knowledge of the original it is hard to form a valid judgment upon this question. Nor is it a matter of moment. Whatever the primal intent, it certainly contains, as we have it today, an abundance of satirical allusions to the general imbecility of mankind, as well as to the vices and iniquities prevalent in times past, and not yet altogether extinct, among officers and dignitaries of the church and the state.

The recital of these adventures, of which Reynard is the hero, has always been held in high esteem among German scholars, but it was not until the genius of Goethe had gathered them into his delightfully written hexameters that the allegory gained a general reception. Now it is so highly appreciated among his fellow-countrymen that the story is to be found in almost every household of the land. It would be well if the same thing could be said of the English speaking peoples of the world, for no one can read it without receiving thereby a benefit whose value will be in direct ratio to the earnestness of the study bestowed upon it. Yet among these peoples it has never been widely known. Hence this new dress. If I shall have succeeded in extending the area of its appreciation, my recompense will be ample; if not, I shall rest contented with the pleasure and the profit that I have myself derived from the attempt.

J. S. C.

## ARGUMENTA.

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### CANTO I.

The Pentecostal days have come,  
And Leo now resolves with some  
Of his good lords to hold a feast,  
At which the greatest and the least  
Shall be commanded to attend.  
The fox, however, keeps away;  
He knows what they of him will say,  
For he has badly injured all;  
So, loudly though they may him call,  
He will not e'en excuses send.

He there is charged with all the crimes  
That have been known from olden times,  
And only one dares him defend.  
This does not much his matters mend,  
For all the cases are too clear.  
The council then is summoned forth,  
Which thinks that, be he south or north,  
To be compelled to come he ought.  
The king declares he shall be brought,  
And sends to summon him the bear.

## CANTO II.

Forth Bruin goes upon his task,  
Assured if he but Reynard ask  
To go with him, as bidden, back,  
He'll find him nothing loth or slack.  
But Reynard is of other mind;  
He pleasant greeting gives the bear  
And asks what he with him can share;  
Then, finding honey's to his taste,  
He takes him to a place in haste  
Where he a good supply shall find.

To get the honey Bruin sticks,  
Through one of Reynard's scurvy tricks,  
His head within a gaping tree;  
And if you read you'll surely see  
How the peasants, learning that,  
Find him in a sorry plight,  
And beat him till, in sheer affright,  
He makes escape and gets again  
Back to court in grief and pain;  
And in his place is sent the cat.

## CANTO III.

Now Tybert meets an omen bad,  
But still pursues his way, though sad.  
He finds the fox, his message gives;  
Then Reynard asks him how he thrives



And what he would prefer to eat.  
When mice he finds that he would like,  
He plays him, too, a dirty trick.  
With eye knocked out and wounded sore  
The cat gets back to court once more,  
Like Bruin lamed in head and feet.

The Badger now essays to do  
What bear and cat have let fall through.  
A third time does the fox not dare  
To disregard, or he will fare  
Full badly at his monarch's hand.  
With Grimbart he at length sets out,  
Beset with many an anxious doubt ;  
He finally begins to pray,  
So Grimbart shrives him on the way  
And warns him evil to withstand.

## CANTO IV.

Excitement's high when it is known  
That Reynard now draws near the throne.  
No sooner there than he begins  
To shift on others all his sins  
And boast of service to the king.  
This, howe'er, doth naught avail,  
For all the beasts do him assail  
And bring complaints, by anger moved.  
Their charges are considered proved,  
And he condemned for them to swing.

But now he talks of treasures vast,  
Which he discovered in the past ;  
And tells of crimes that then were rife,  
And plots to take the monarch's life  
And set up Bruin in his place.  
These words the king do greatly rouse,  
And likewise much excite his spouse ;  
So he is ordered to descend  
And tell them all from end to end,  
Without evasion. face to face.

## CANTO V.

Reynard now the plot sets forth,  
And shows the treasure's princely worth ;  
Maligins his father, scores the bear,  
And makes the badger out as clear  
A traitor as was ever found.  
He tells what he himself has done,  
For firmer friend the king has none.  
To frustrate all their base designs.  
Of how he's treated then he whines,  
As if in loyalty not sound.

The king and queen his lies believe,  
And promise that he shall receive  
Forgiveness full for all mistakes  
That he has made, or ever makes,  
If only now he change his life.  
He, too, before returning home,

Permission gets to visit Rome,  
To get release from papal ban,  
Which Leo thinks a worthy plan,  
As also does the queen, his wife.

## CANTO VI.

Now Reynard to the wolves' dismay,  
From both their hides has cut away  
A slice, to make him sack and shoes,  
And then upon his journey goes;  
But first he by the priest is blest.  
A cavalcade of nobles go  
With him some steps, respect to show;  
But ram and hare induces he  
To travel on, his home to see,  
And there before return to rest.

Inside the house he takes the hare,  
And slaughters him as soon as there;  
His head he puts within the sack,  
Which by the ram he sendeth back,  
As if it bore a king's despatch  
The head is found, the ram's condemned,  
And with the captives matters mend;  
Once more to honor they are brought,  
And Reynard's life again is sought,  
Who deed so dastardly could hatch.

## CANTO VII.

A feast of such display and size  
Is seldom seen by mortal eyes  
As now is carried on because  
The wolves and bear, against just laws,  
Have been to punishment condemned.  
Before its close, complaints anew  
Against the fox are brought to view;  
The rabbit and the crow lament  
That he on them his spite hath spent,  
And urge the king such things to end.

An expedition now is formed,  
And Reynard's fort is to be stormed;  
Each one desires that he be sent,  
For they his acts do all resent,  
And would chastise him out of hand.  
The badger runs the fox to find,  
And tell him what they have in mind;  
Then him induces back to go,  
As he will have much better show  
If there on his defense he stand.

## CANTO VIII.

The fox again that journey takes,  
A second time confession makes,  
And as before he tries to shift  
His sins to others' backs, and lift

The burden thus from off his own.  
The clergy now he takes in hand,  
The king and courtiers of the land:  
These all can do whate'er they will,  
But should a poor man fall, they'll fill  
The air with shrieks and hunt him down.

The ape now comes upon the two,  
And tells the fox bold front to show;  
To Rome he goes, and there he will  
Make slander's tongue keep very still  
And Reynard's matters straighten out.  
He knows them all at court of Rome,  
With all their tactics is at home;  
His kinsmen are in numbers there,  
With them he'll manage this affair,  
And Reynard need not give it thought.

## CANTO IX.

With Grimbart Reynard comes to court,  
Begins a discourse far from short,  
In which he labors hard to show  
That his accusers, as they know,  
Dare naught against him bring point-blank.  
He challenges to mortal strife  
Each one of those who seek his life  
And equals are with him in birth;  
For thus is settled, o'er the earth,  
Disputes 'tween gentlemen of rank.

The king in fury seeks his room,  
And there he finds the queen, with whom  
Dame Rückenau, old Martin's wife,  
In converse is about this strife.  
She Reynard's cause begins to plead,  
Shows how in court his father shone,  
How Reynard, too, had often done  
Most worthy deeds where others failed.  
The king his anger then bewailed,  
And let the fox again proceed.

## CANTO X.

The fox describes those treasures vast  
Mentioned in some cantos past:  
I meant them all for queen and king,  
And now the ram has everything,  
Which naught can e'er replace, purloined;  
Those things I sent by ram and hare,  
And thus am caught within a snare,  
For Bellyn has poor Lampen killed;  
A comrade's blood he's foully spilled,  
With whom he was as envoy joined.

And I am charged with this base crime;  
You think me guilty every time  
Some wicked handicraft is done,  
Though I am ever on the run  
My king to serve, whom I adore.

His speech is clever, well designed,  
The king's induced to change his mind,  
Extends to Reynard leave to go  
And seek those treasures high and low;  
But Isengrim feels very sore.

## CANTO XI.

The wolf in ferment seeks the king,  
The air with caustic words doth ring;  
The king hears all he has to say,  
And then decides that Reynard may  
His version of the matter give.  
The fox once more, with tricks of speech,  
Makes out himself a saint, who'd teach  
All beasts how proper lives to lead;  
Yet they through spite, he says, proceed  
To claim that he's not fit to live.

The furious wolf throws down his glove,  
To signify that he will prove.  
In combat, all his charges true.  
Poor Reynard now can nothing do  
But take the challenge up and fight.  
The she-ape comes and proffers aid  
And Reynard soon by her is made  
All ready for the coming strife,  
In which is wagered life for life,  
To manifest where dwells the right.

## CANTO XII.

The fox and wolf within the ring  
Their duel fight before the king;  
And never have elsewhere before  
Sly Reynard's tricks availed him more.  
With body shorn and laved with oil  
Evades he all the wolf's attacks;  
And then with subtle twists and knacks  
He conquers Isengrim outright.  
Low cunning better serves than might,  
In folly's strife or reason's toil.

The wolf from off the field is borne,  
Defeated, wounded, and forlorn;  
His wife and friends about him grieve,  
And think that he can hardly live.  
But Reynard is exalted high;  
Success has brought a change of front;  
The king and all who him were wont  
To vilify are now his friends.  
And thus it is this fable ends;  
Its moral you can now supply.



# REYNARD THE FOX

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## CANTO ONE

Whitsun, that fairest of feasts, had arrived;  
the forest and field  
Rejoiced in new life; on hillock and knoll,  
in thicket and hedge,  
The newly inspirited birds were singing  
their jubilant song;  
The meads were all sprouting with flowers,  
infilling with fragrance the dales,  
The heavens resplendently clear, and blush-  
ing the earth like a bride.

King Leo assembles his court; the vassals  
and lords of the realm,  
Called hither, make haste with the greatest  
of pomp. Among them arrive

Great numbers of arrogant peers from the  
length and the breadth of the land,  
Lord Grusly the crane, sir Pica the jay,  
and all of the chiefs.

Then makes up the monarch his mind, with  
all of his barons, at once 10  
In splendor and state to hold court, and  
bids to be thither convoked

Together regardless of caste the little as  
well as the great.

Of all not a soul should be missed; but ab-  
sent, however, was one,

Sly Reynard, that rascal and knave, who,  
because of his many misdeeds,

Himself kept away from the court. As  
shuns the conscience depraved

The light of the day, so avoided the fox  
this assembly of lords,

For each of them had to complain that  
harm he had done to them all,

And Grimbart the badger alone, the son of  
his brother, had spared.

Wolf, Isengrim, opened the case, and with  
him in court there appeared

His kinsmen, adherents, and friends; escorted  
and succored by these, 20  
He stepped up in front of the king and  
began with the following speech:  
Most worshipful monarch and lord, give ear  
to my grievances, pray;  
Thou art noble and great and renowned,  
and to each of us all dost accord  
Justice and mercy and grace; compassion  
then show for the wrongs  
That I, with such boundless reproach, have  
suffered from Reynard, the fox;  
And bear well in mind, above all, that  
times without number he has,  
In malice, made sport of my wife, and my  
children most basely ill-used.  
Yes, he has them with foulness defiled,  
with pestilent, virulent filth,  
Whereby I have still three at home with  
harrowing blindness distressed.  
These offences were all, it is true, discussed  
by us both long ago, 30  
And a day, indeed, was ordained to settle  
the things in dispute;

He plighted his word under oath, but soon  
his intention he changed,  
And then to his fortress he nimbly escaped.  
Too well is this known  
By those who are here in the court and  
now all about me I see.  
My lord, the vexation and grief the villain  
has caused me I could  
Not attempt to relate with hurrying words  
in multiplied weeks.  
Were all of the linen from Ghent, what-  
ever the quantity made,  
At once into parchment reduced, the story  
it would not contain,  
And I will be silent thereon, yet my wife's  
defamation and shame  
Eats into my heart, and I would it avenge,  
let happen what may.

40

Now when in this sorrowful mood Isengrim  
thus had declaimed,  
A puppy, named Nidget, stepped up and,  
timidly speaking in French,

Told the monarch how poor he'd become, so  
that nothing at all had been left  
For his use but a morsel of sausage laid up  
in a winter retreat;  
And Reynard had robbed him of that. Then  
hurriedly sprang forth the cat,  
Mad Tybert, with fury, and said: Com-  
mander, distinguished and high,  
No one has cause to complain that the  
scoundrel may do him a wrong  
Any more than our sovereign himself. In  
this convocation I say  
There is none, be he aged or young, but  
dreads more intensely the scamp  
Than even yourself. There's nothing, how-  
ever, to Nidget's lament; 50  
A number of years have gone by since the  
acts that he mentions occurred,  
And seeing the sausage was mine, 'twas I  
who complaint should have made.  
I went to take part in a hunt and, while  
thus engaged, I ran through  
A mill in the night; the miller's wife slept,  
and I quietly seized

A sausage quite small; I will it confess.  
Now, pray, to the same  
Had Nidget a shadow of right, then he  
owed it to labor of mine.

And the panther began: What use are  
these wordy complaints?  
They little achieve; be content, the evil's  
as clear as the day;  
A thief and a cut-throat he is, this at  
least I will boldly assert;  
Indeed you, my lords, are aware that he  
perpetrates all the known crimes. 60  
Should all of the nobles, indeed, or you,  
our most worshipful king,  
Of goods and of honor be robbed, he  
would laugh could he get for himself,  
By chance, but a morsel thereby of a capon  
well fattened and plump.  
Let me bring to your knowledge what he  
so wickedly did yestermorn  
To Lampen, the hare; here he stands, the  
man who has never done wrong.

Reynard assumed the devout, and would in  
all kinds of device  
Him shortly instruction impart, including a  
chaplain's pursuits;  
So facing each other they sat and their  
task with the Credo began.  
But abandon old tricks and their use, was  
Reynard not able to do;  
Within the safe conduct and peace bestowed  
and assured by our king 70  
He Lampen held fast in his fangs, and  
worried with malice and spite  
The good honest man like a fiend. I  
wended my way through the street  
And heard the low chant of the two,  
which, almost as soon as begun,  
Was brought to an end. I listened sur-  
prised but, when I drew near,  
I recognized Reynard forthwith; he Lampen  
held fast by the throat,  
And surely had taken his life if I, by good  
luck, in my walk,  
Had not then arrived on the scene. Here  
now in your presence he stands;

Just look at the wounds he received, that  
innocent person whom none  
Would ever attempt to molest. And should  
our good master permit,  
Or ever your lordships endure, that thus  
may the peace of the king, 80  
His warrant and license, be mocked and  
made of no worth by a thief,  
I fear me that yet will the king be forced  
with his offspring to hear  
A tardy reproach from the folk, who reverence  
justice and right.

Isengrim said in reply: You say what is  
true, and, alas!  
The fox never will any good to us do,  
and I heartily wish  
The fellow were dead long ago; that for  
peace-loving folk had been best,  
And if we him pardon again, then will he,  
before very long,  
Some of us boldly entrap, who at present  
imagine it least.



Reynard's nephew, the badger, now spoke,  
and with courage and force  
In Reynard's behalf he held forth, de-  
praved as the latter was known. 90  
The maxim, though old, he remarked, is  
true, my lord Isengrim, proved:  
There is little that's good in an enemy's  
words. Thus my uncle, in truth,  
Small comfort will find in your speech;  
yet is that of but little account.  
Were he at the court to reply to your  
words, and enjoyed he with you  
The favor and grace of the king, then  
might it you surely repent  
That you had so spoken in spite, and all  
this old tattle revived.  
The evil, however, that you to Reynard him-  
self have produced  
You are silent about, and yet to my lords  
in great number 'tis known  
How together a compact you made, and  
each to the other engaged  
As two equal colleagues to live. Here's  
something I ought to relate: 100

How once in the winter himself he put to  
the greatest of risks  
Altogether for you. A man with a wagon  
full laden with fish  
Was pacing the street; you scented him out  
and willingly would  
Have feasted yourself on his goods; but  
alas, you no money possessed,  
So persuaded my uncle to help; and him-  
self he with craftiness laid  
At once in the road as if dead. By heav-  
ens, that venture was bold!  
Yet notice what species of fish, he got for  
the risk that he took.  
The carrier came to the spot, my uncle  
perceived in the road,  
And hastily drew out his sword to evict  
him forthwith, but he lay  
As if dead; he made not a motion or  
sign, and the wagoner then 110  
Threw him up on the top of his cart, glad  
of the skin in advance.  
Yes! that dared my uncle for Isengrim's  
sake; the cartman at once

Continued his way, and Reynard threw  
some of the fish to the ground;  
Then Isengrim came sneaking in from afar,  
and ate it all up.  
Reynard thought it not well any longer to  
ride, so lifted himself  
And sprang from the cart; and now he  
himself on the booty would feed,  
But gobbled had Isengrim all; indeed so  
completely had he  
Himself overgorged, he was ready to burst;  
the bones cleanly picked  
Were the only things he had left, which  
remnants he offered his friend.  
One more little trick I will tell, which also  
is naught but the truth: 120  
To Reynard it known had become, on a  
a nail at a countryman's house  
Hung a well fattened swine, but yesterday  
killed; of this he informed  
With frankness the wolf; they went to the  
place, the profit and risk  
To fairly divide; but the danger and toil  
bore Reynard alone.

Right in at the window he crept, and then  
with great labor he threw  
The booty for both below to the wolf; just  
now, by ill luck,  
Not far from the place were some dogs,  
who scented him out in the house  
And stalwartly tugged at his skin. Sore  
wounded he made his escape,  
And Isengrim quickly sought out, to him  
made complaint of his woes,  
Demanding his share of the meat. And  
Isengrim thereupon said: 130  
For you a fine morsel I've saved; now earnestly  
set you to work  
And heartily gnaw at it well; how much  
you will relish the fat.  
He brought the delicious piece forth; 'twas  
nought but the crook upon which  
The butcher had hung up the hog. The  
savory flesh and the fat  
Had been gulped by the covetous wolf, that  
base and iniquitous beast.  
Now Reynard, from rage, was unable to  
speak; but the turn of his thoughts

You can think for yourself. Great king, of  
a truth, in a hundred and more  
Of matters like this has the wolf to my  
uncle behaved like a knave.

But not a word more about that; were  
Reynard himself summoned here,  
His case he would better defend. Mean-  
while, most beneficent king, 140

Most noble of masters and lords, I here beg  
to notice that you

And all of these lords will have heard how  
stupidly Isengrim's speech

Hath damaged the wife of his choice, and  
tarnished her honor, which he

With limb and with life should defend.

Now these are the facts of the case:

Years seven and more have arrived and gone  
by since my uncle bestowed,

Without any thought of reserve, his love  
and allegiance upon

Dame Greedimund's beauty and charms.

This happened one night at a dance

Which Isengrim failed to attend; I say what  
I know to be true.

Most friendly and pleasantly oft has she his  
advances received.

Now what is there more to be said? She  
never has made any charge; 150

Moreover she lives and is well, so why  
does he make such a fuss?

He silence would keep were he wise; it  
brings to him only disgrace.

The badger then further remarked: Now  
comes this romance of the hare!

Detestable, vacuous talk! Should not a good  
master, forsooth,

His pupil correct, if he be not attentive and  
evil withstand?

If never we punished our boys, and put not  
a potent restraint

On frivolous habits and bad, into what would  
develop our youth?

Young Nidget next comes and complains,  
how a sausage, one winter, he lost

Aback of the hedge; but this should he  
rather in silence endure,

For certainly hear we it said that some one  
had stolen the thing. 160

Goes lightly what lightly is got; and who  
can my uncle reproach  
For easing a thief of his stolen effects? It  
surely is right  
That men of high station and birth, them-  
selves to rascals and thieves  
Should hateful and dangerous show. Why!  
had he him thereupon hanged,  
Excuse there had been; yet he set him at  
large to honor the king,  
For penance by death to inflict has no one  
the right but the king.  
The requital, however, is poor, on which can  
my uncle rely,  
How guileless so e'er he may be and deeds  
that are evil impede.  
As matter of fact, ever since the peace of  
the king was proclaimed,  
Conducts himself no one as he. He has  
altered completely his life; 170  
Eats but one meal a day, like an anchorit  
lives, chastises himself,  
Wears raiment of hair on unsheltered skin,  
and has also for long

Desisted entirely from flesh of all kinds, both  
domestic and wild,  
As yesterday I was informed by one who  
had stayed at his house,  
He has left Malepartus, his fort, and built  
a small hut for himself,  
In which as a hermit to live. How lately  
so thin he's become,  
So pallid from hunger and thirst and other  
like penances sharp,  
That he in repentance endures, yourselves  
into that will enquire.  
Then what can it matter to him if all who  
are here him accuse?  
Should he but arrive, his rights he'd uphold  
and them put to shame. 180

When Grimbart had drawn to a close, to the  
wonder of all there appeared  
Henning, the cock, with the whole of his  
brood. On a sorrowful bier,  
Despoiled of her neck and her head, was a  
hen carried slowly within;



Poor Scraper it turned out to be, most prolific of egg-laying hens;

Alas, how her blood trickled down! and Reynard had caused it to flow.

This now must be brought to the ear of the king. When Henning, the brave,

Presented himself to the king with sad and most grief-stricken face,

Came with him still other two cocks, who also lamented their loss.

The one of them Kreyant was called, and no better cock could be found

If Holland and France were explored; the other, who stood by his side, 190

Was known by the name of Kantart, a fellow straightforward and stout.

Each carried a candle alight, and it happened that brothers were both

Of the massacred hen they brought in; and over the murder they cried

For trouble and pain. Two younger cocks were supporting the bier,

And the wailing they made as they came could plainly be heard afar off.

At length Henning spake: That loss we  
bewail which none can repair,  
Benevolent master and king! Oh, pity the  
wrong we endure,  
My children as well as myself! Here look  
you on Reynard's foul deed.  
When winter had from us gone by, and  
leaves and blossoms and flowers  
Invited us all to be glad, I much in my  
offspring rejoiced, 200  
That spent the delectable days so blithely  
and gaily with me.  
Ten juvenile sons with daughters fourteen,  
and all of them full  
Of relish and pleasure in life; my wife,  
that most excellent hen,  
Together had brought them all up in a  
summer as happy as long;  
They all were robust and content with their  
lot, and provided themselves  
Each day with the food they required at a  
spot that was thought to be safe.  
The court-yard belonged to rich monks, and  
its walls were a shelter to us

And six immense dogs. These partners, so  
noble and brave, of our home  
Were much to my children attached and  
sharply watched over their lives;  
But Reynard, that thief, it annoyed that we,  
in contentment and peace, 210  
Such gay, happy days should enjoy, and  
meantime escape from his wiles;  
By night he would sneak round the walls,  
and waiting would lie at the gate;  
But the dogs found it out, so he took to  
his heels; yet boldly, at length,  
They managed to collar him once, and then  
they made holes in his fur;  
Yet out of their hands he escaped, and left  
us in peace for awhile.  
Now give me your ear; this lasted not long;  
he soon came again  
As a monk, and brought me a writing and  
seal; 'twas one that I knew;  
Your signet I saw on the deed, in which I  
found clearly inscribed  
That you a firm peace had proclaimed, as  
well with the birds as the beasts.

To me the announcement he made that he  
a good monk had become, 220  
Had taken the solemnest vow atonement to  
make for his crimes,  
Of which he acknowledged his guilt. From  
that time should no one from him  
Have anything further to fear. He had  
sacredly taken an oath  
That meat never more would he taste. He  
directed my eyes to his cowl  
And his scapular showed. In addition to  
this, he a symbol displayed,  
Which the prior upon him had placed;  
and, in order me more to assure,  
Beneath showed a garment of hair. Then  
taking departure he said:  
Farewell, in the name of the Lord. I  
have still a great number of things  
To do before close of the day. The Sexts  
I must read and the Nones,  
With Vespers appended thereto. He read  
as he walked, and devised 230  
Numerous schemes that were base; to effect  
our destruction he planned.

With a heart full of gladness and joy I  
soon to my children made known  
Your letter's good message of cheer. They  
all were entranced at the news!  
Since Reynard a monk had become, for us  
not a thing was there left  
Any further to care for or fear. I strutted  
together with them,  
On the outermost side of the walls, and we  
all in our freedom rejoiced.  
But alas! matters went with us ill; in am-  
bush he craftily hid,  
And thence springing suddenly forth, he  
barred up our way to the gate;  
The fairest he seized of my sons, and  
dragged him away to devour;  
And now not a thing could we do; when  
once he had tasted their flesh 240  
He ever was trying again, and neither the  
hunters nor hounds  
Could make us secure from his snares, not  
either by day or by night.  
And thus nearly all of my children he  
took, till now from a score

Their number to five is reduced; of the  
rest he has carried off all.

Oh, pity my woeful distress! But a day  
has gone by since he slew

This daughter of mine that is here, whose  
body was saved by the dogs.

Observe! Here she lies! That deed he  
has done; oh, take it to heart.

Then answered the monarch and said:  
Grimbart, come nearer, and look!

In this way abstains our recluse, and thus  
he his penitence shows!

From now should I live but a year, be  
sure that he shall it repent. 250

But what is the use of our words? Thou  
heart-broken Henning, give heed;

Thy daughter for nothing shall want, what-  
ever it be, that belongs

By custom or right to the dead. I will  
see that her vigil be sung,

That she with all honor be laid in the  
earth; when that has been done,

We council will take with these lords on  
the penalty due to the crime.

Then issued the king a command that service be held for the dead.

Domino placebo the people assembled began,  
and they sang

Each stanza composing it through. I also  
could further relate

By whom was the service intoned, by whom  
the responses as well,

But that too much time would employ, and  
therefore I leave it alone. 260

Her body was laid in a grave, over which  
was erected a fair

Marble stone, polished up like a glass, and  
cut in the form of a square,

Quite bulky and tall, and upon it, above,  
could plainly be read:

Here Scraper, the daughter of Henning,  
doth lie, most faithful of hens,

Laid numerous eggs in her nest, and prudently  
knew how to scratch.

Alas, here she lies! from her family torn  
by the murderous fox.

All in the world shall be taught how wicked  
and vile he behaved,

And bemoan the deceased. Thus ran the  
inscription engraven thereon.

This having been done, the king had the  
wisest convoked  
To counsel with him and advise as to how  
should be punished the crime 270  
That now had so clearly been brought to  
the knowledge of him and his lords;  
At length their opinion they gave, that un-  
to the mischievous scamp  
An envoy at once be dispatched, that, willy  
or nilly, he dare  
Not refuse to obey; that he at the court  
of the king shall appear  
On the day when the judges next time to-  
gether assemble therein.  
And chosen was Bruin, the bear, the sum-  
mons to take; and the king  
Thus spake unto Bruin, the bear: As mas-  
ter I give you advice  
Your errand with zeal to perform; yet  
prudence and caution I charge,



For Reynard's malicious and mean; devices  
and tricks of all kinds

He surely will bring into play; will flatter  
and stuff you with lies, 280

And all that is possible cheat. Twice will  
he think about that,

Replied, with assurance, the bear. Let  
nought you disturb, for if he

Misjudge by the breadth of a hair and ven-  
ture his scorn upon me,

Then by the eternal I swear, that his ven-  
geance upon me may fall

If I do not so pay it him back, that know  
where he is he will not. 285

## CANTO TWO.

Thus ordered, sir Bruin pursued his way to  
the mountainous ridge,  
With haughty and confident heart, through  
a wilderness sterile and vast,  
Long and sandy and broad; and, when  
this at length he had passed,  
He came very close to the hills where  
wonted was Reynard to hunt;  
Indeed, in the days that were gone, he  
pleasure had sought there himself.  
But the bear further went, Malepartus towards,  
where Reynard had long  
Fine buildings in number possessed. Of  
all his strong castles and burgs,  
Of which to him many belonged, he thought  
Malepartus the best.  
In this Reynard made his abode, whenever  
a danger he sniffed.  
When Bruin the castle attained, the gate  
of admittance he found 10  
Fast bolted and locked, so before it he  
walked and reflected somewhat.

He finally shouted and said: Are you,  
my dear uncle, at home?

Bruin, the bear, has arrived, judicially sent  
by the king.

Our monarch has taken an oath that now  
at the bar of his court

Yourself you shall place upon trial, and I  
am your escort to be;

That justice you shall not refuse to render  
to all and accept;

If not it will cost you your life, for if you  
shall tarry behind,

With rack you are threatened and wheel.

I advise you to choose for the best,

And come with me back to the court, it  
else will you evil betide.

This speech, from beginning to end, Rey-  
nard did perfectly hear; 20

In silence he listened and thought: How  
would it, I wonder, result,

If I the unmannerly churl should pay for  
his arrogant words?

Let us upon it reflect. To the depths of  
his dwelling he went,  
Into its corners and nooks, for built was  
the castle with skill;  
Caverns and dungeons there were, and many  
dark corridors too,  
Both narrow and long, and doors of all  
kinds to be opened and shut  
As time and necessity called. When sought  
for he found that he was,  
Because of some rascally deed, here found  
he the best of defence.  
Through simplicity too had he oft in these  
labyrinthian ways  
Poor animals cheated and caught, acceptable  
prey to the thief. 30  
Now Reynard the words had well heard,  
but yet did he cunningly fear  
That near to the messenger still might  
others in ambush be couched.  
But when he himself had assured that the  
bear had arrived all alone,  
He went slyly out and exclaimed: My  
dearest of uncles, you are

“Your pardon I beg ! I vespers have read,  
And thus have I caused you to wait.”





Very welcome, I'm sure! Your pardon I  
beg! I vespers have read,  
And thus have I caused you to wait; my  
thanks for this visit accept,  
It surely will help me in court; at least so  
permit me to hope.

You are welcome, my uncle, whatever the  
hour; however, I think

That censure must rest upon him who you  
on this journey has sent,

For long and fatiguing it is. Oh, heavens,  
how heated you are! 40

You've not a dry hair in your head, your  
breathing anxiety shows.

Had this mighty monarch of ours no mes-  
senger other to send

Than the noblest of men at his court, exalted  
by him above all?

Yet thus it must be of great service to me;  
and now I entreat

Your help at the court of the king, where  
I am so badly defamed.

Tomorrow I'd made up my mind, in spite  
of the risk that I run,

Unbidden to go to the court, and such my  
intention remains;

I'm not in condition today, to try such a  
journey to take:

I've eaten too freely, alas, of a dish that  
I relish not much,

And one that agrees with me not; it causes  
my belly great pain. 50

Bruin responded to this: What was it my  
uncle? The fox

Replied in his turn: What good would it  
do, if you I should tell?

With sorrow prolong I my life, but still  
I'm resigned to my fate.

The poor cannot ever be lords, and if at  
odd times can be found

No food that is better for us and for ours,  
then truly we must

Some combs of sweet honey devour, which  
always with ease can be had;

Yet eat it I only from need; and swollen  
at present I am.

The stuff I reluctantly ate, how then could  
it nourishment give?



If without it I ever can do, it rests far  
enough from my tongue.

Heigh-ho, responded the bear, what is it,  
my uncle, you say! 60

Do you in reality scorn the nectar that so  
many crave?

Good honey, I must you inform, surpasses  
all dishes there are,

At least to my taste; oh, help me to  
some! You shall it not rue!

The favor I will you return. You are  
mocking, the other replied.

Protested the bear: I am not; indeed I  
mean just what I say.

If that is the case, then you I can serve,  
the red one replied.

The husbandman, Rüsteviel, lives below at  
the foot of the hill,

And plenty of honey has he. Indeed,  
among all of your race

Saw you never collected so much. Then  
lusted the bear overmuch

To eat of his favorite food. Oh, take me,  
my uncle, he cried, 70  
Without losing time, to the place; your  
kindness I'll never forget;  
Supply me with honey I beg, even though  
not enough can be got.  
Come on, said the fox in reply, of honey  
no lack shall we find;  
Today, it is true, I am bad on the feet,  
yet shall the regard  
Which long I have cherished for you, en-  
courage my wearisome steps;  
For I know not a soul among those who  
to me are 'connected by blood  
Whom I honor, my uncle, as you! So  
come, and you will, in return,  
Me serve at the court of the king, when  
there I shall have to appear,  
That I to confusion may put the charges  
and strength of my foes.  
With honey I'll fill you today, as much as  
you ever could wish. 80  
He was thinking, the scamp, of the blows  
the peasants would give in their wrath.

Reynard in front hurried off and Bruin  
came blindly behind.

If I but succeed, thought the fox, I yet  
shall conduct you today

To a market in which unto you bitter  
honey apportioned will be.

They came up to Rüsteviel's yard, which  
greatly elated the bear;

But in vain, as fools very often themselves  
with hopes lead astray.

Eve had already set in, and Reynard quite  
well was aware

That Rüsteviel lay, as a rule, just now in  
his chamber in bed.

He a carpenter was, a craftsman of skill,  
and down in his yard

Was lying the trunk of an oak, in order  
to split which he had 90

Two good solid wedges inserted therein, so  
far that on top

Gaped open the tree near the width of an  
ell. This Reynard observed

And said to the bear: Dear uncle, inside  
of this tree will be found  
More honey than you would suspect, now  
thrust in it quickly your snout  
As far as you possibly can. I merely  
would risk the advice  
That in greed you take not too much; it  
might with you badly agree.  
Do you, said the bear, for a glutton me  
take? Why no, not at all,  
But temperance always is good, whatever it  
be that you do.  
Thus was outwitted the bear! his head he  
stuck into the crack,  
Yea, even right up to his ears, and further-  
more both his front paws. 100  
Then earnestly Reynard fell to, with many  
strong pulls and good tugs,  
And both of the wedges tore out. Now  
was the brown fellow caught,  
Held fast by his head and his feet, nor  
scolding nor coaxing availed.  
Bruin now had a-plenty to do, for all of  
his boldness and strength;

And thus kept the nephew with craft his  
uncle engaged in the tree.  
With howls now lamented the bear, and  
tore, with his hindermost claws,  
So fiercely and raised such a row that  
Rüsteviel sprang out of bed  
And wondered whatever was up; he took  
along with him his axe,  
So as weaponless not to be found, should  
any one try him to harm.

Bruin was now in a terrible fix; for the  
narrowing crack 110  
Was pinching him hard; he struggled and  
pulled and roared with his pain;  
His efforts, however, were all of no use;  
he fully believed  
That never therefrom should he come; so  
Reynard, too, joyfully thought.  
When he in the distance observed Rüsteviel  
coming, he cried:  
Bruin, how do you feel? Be thrifty and  
eat not the honey all up!

Does it taste very good? Rüsteviel comes  
and will give you a treat;

He brings you a sip for your meal; I hope  
it will with you agree.

Then Reynard pursued his way back, Mal-  
epartus, his fortress to gain;

But Rüsteviel came in his stead and, when  
he put eyes on the bear,

He ran all the peasants to call, who in  
company still at the inn 120

Were over their cups. Come on, he cried  
out, in my yard there is caught

A bear in a trap; that really is so. They  
followed in haste,

Each arming himself with despatch as well as  
the time would allow.

The first took a fork in his hand, another  
brought with him his rake,

And likewise a third and a fourth, provided  
with hatchet and spear,

Came bounding with vigorous strides; a  
fifth was equipped with a pole.

The sexton and even the priest came on  
with the tools of their trade.

And also the clergyman's cook, (of whom  
was Dame Yulock the name,  
And who as none other a porridge could  
serve) remained not behind,  
But ran with her distaff in hand, at which  
all the day she had sat, 130  
To curry the skin of the luckless bear.  
Bruin heard, as they came,  
The increasing and deafening din with all  
its most horrible notes,  
And forcibly tore out his head from the  
cleft; but yet there remained  
The hair and the skin of his face, as far  
as his ears, in the tree.  
Indeed, not a wretcheder beast has anyone  
seen, for the blood  
Trickled over his ears. But what did he  
gain by releasing his head?  
For still were his paws firmly held in the  
tree; now backing he tore  
Them hastily out with a jerk; he raved as  
if out of his mind,  
His claws and the skin from his feet being  
left in the narrowing crack.

No taste of sweet honey had this; alas, it  
was not such as that 140  
Which Reynard him led to expect. The  
outing was wickedly planned,  
A sorrowful trip to the bear it had proved;  
his beard and his paws  
Were covered all over with blood; he was  
wholly unable to stand,  
Unable to walk or to crawl. Now Rüste-  
viel hastened to strike;  
He was fallen upon by them all who had  
with the master arrived;  
Their aim was to put him to death. The  
priest for preparedness brought  
A staff of some length in his hand, and  
waled him therewith from afar.  
Now hither and thither in sadness he  
turned, hemmed in by the crowd;  
Some here bearing pikes, others with axes  
out there, while the smith  
Brought hammer and tongs to the fray,  
and others with shovels arrived, 150  
Some also with spades, and shouting they  
pummelled at random and struck,



Till he, out of harrowing fear, wallowed  
in foulness his own.

In the onset they all took a hand; not one  
of them all stayed away.

And Hulyn, the bow-legged clown, with  
Ludolph, the flat-nozzled rogue,

By far were the worst; and Gerold aloft  
swung the hard wooden flail

His long crooked fingers between; his broth-  
er-in-law at his side,

The burly old Korkoran, stood; these two  
struck him worst of them all.

Dames Yulock and Abelquack too had also  
their part in the strife,

The latter, the worse of the two, struck the  
poor thing with her tub.

And those above named were not all; the  
women as well as the men 160

All ran to the spot, determined to have  
the life of the bear.

Old Korkoran made the most noise, regard-  
ing himself as the chief;

For Poggy of Chafport was known his  
mother to be very well,

And that by the sinister bar, but his father  
was never revealed;  
The peasants, however, believed that Sander  
was probably he,  
The dark-featured gleaner of straw, a fellow  
robust and superb  
When he by himself was alone. Stones  
also came flying with force,  
And harrassed the desperate bear, as they  
from all sides were received.  
Now Rüsteviel's brother jumped up and  
struck, with a long sturdy club,  
The bear on the top of his head, so hard  
that both hearing and sight 170  
Were wholly destroyed; yet started he up  
from the vigorous stroke  
And, enraged, at the women he rushed,  
who into confusion were thrown,  
And tottered and tumbled and yelled, and  
into the water some fell;  
And the water was deep. Then out cried  
the father and said: Look out!  
Down there is Dame Yulock, my cook,  
floating below in her furs;

Her distaff is here on the bank; come help  
her, you men! I will give

Two barrels of beer as reward, with ample  
indulgence and grace.

The bear they all left lying there as if  
dead, and hurried away

To the water the women to save, and drew  
out the five to the land.

The bear waddled slowly away while the  
men were engaged at the shore, 180

And into the water he crawled in arrant  
distress, and he roared

In horrible anguish and pain; he rather  
would much have been drowned,

Than blows so disgraceful endure. To swim  
he had never essayed,

And now in his misery hoped that his life  
he might end on the spot.

Against expectation he found that he swam,  
and was luckily borne

By the water a distance below. Then him  
all the peasants observed,

And exclaimed: To us this will certainly  
prove an eternal disgrace!

They all out of humor became, and began  
at the women to scold:

'Twere better had they stayed at home;  
just look now and see how he swims

Down there on his way. Then close they  
approached to examine the log, 190

And in it remaining they found the skin  
and the hair from his head,

And also his feet, and chuckled thereover  
and cried: You will come

To us surely again; meanwhile we accept  
your ears as a pledge.

And thus to his injuries added they jeers,  
yet happy was he

The evil like this to escape. The peasants  
he roundly reviled,

Who him had chastised, lamented the pain  
in his ears and his feet,

And Reynard denounced, who him had  
betrayed. With prayers like these

He swam further off, urged on by the stream,  
which was rapid and large,

Within but a short space of time, below  
very nearly a mile,

And then on the very same bank, all  
breathless he waded ashore. 200

No beast in a bitterer plight till then had  
the sun ever seen.

The morning he thought that he never  
should see; he fully believed

He must instantly die, and cried: Oh, Reynard,  
you villainous wretch!

You dissolute scamp! He was thinking  
besides of the pummelling boors;

And also he thought of the tree, and Reynard's  
deception he cursed.

Reynard, however, the fox, when he, with  
precaution so good,

His uncle to market had led, with honey  
him there to supply,

Went after some fowls, whose dwelling he  
knew, and pounced upon one,

Then rapidly ran to the stream, dragging  
his booty along;

There he despatched it at once and hastened  
to other affairs, 210

The river still keeping close by; he drank  
of the water and thought:  
How happy and joyous I feel, at having  
the dull-witted bear  
Thus led to the carpenter's yard! I'll wager  
that Rüsteviel let  
Him have a good taste of his axe. Always  
the bear has displayed  
Malevolent feelings to me; and now I have  
paid it him back.  
My uncle I've always him dubbed, and now  
in the cleft of a tree  
He lifeless remains; and for that I'll rejoice  
so long as I live.  
No more will he render his damaging  
plaints! And, roaming along,  
He looked at the river below, and saw the  
bear rolling about;  
To the core of his heart he was vexed  
that Bruin had living escaped. 220  
He Rüsteviel cried, you indolent wight,  
you blundering fool,  
Fat meat such as this you disdain, so tender  
and good to the taste,

Which any sane man might desire, and  
which, with such infinite ease,

Fell unawares into your hands! But still,  
for your welcome so kind

Has the innocent bear left behind him a  
pledge. Thus were his thoughts

As he upon Bruin set eyes, downcast,  
bloody, and faint.

He finally called to the bear: Do I find  
you, sir uncle, again?

Have you anything lost in Rüsteviel's yard?  
Tell me and I'll let

Him know where you make your abode. I  
also should tell him, I think,

That doubtless you have from the man a  
good lot of honey purloined. 230

Or have you him honestly paid? How was  
it that this came about?

Dear me! Who has painted you so? You  
have a deplorable look.

Your taste did the honey not suit? At the  
same identical price

Can more of it yet be obtained. Now, uncle,  
do tell me at once

The name of the order to which you have  
lately devoted yourself,  
That you on your head have begun a red-  
colored bonnet to wear!  
Is it true that you now are a monk? The  
barber assuredly has,  
In trying your tonsure to shave, made a  
very bad snip at your ears;  
I see you are losing your hair and also the  
skin from your cheeks,  
And even your gauntlets as well. Where  
did you leave them to hang? 240  
And thus the poor bear was compelled, his  
numerous bantering words  
One after the other to hear; while he, in  
his pain, could not speak;  
Was indeed at his very wits' end; and so  
as not further to hear,  
Back into the water he crept, and swam  
with the swift-flowing tide,  
Lower down, till a shore that was level he  
found; he landed and lay  
Disheartened and sick; lamented aloud and  
remarked to himself:



Oh, that some one would kill me outright!  
I'm unable to walk, and I ought  
My journey to make to the court of the  
king; yet here I remain,  
So shamefully injured, behind, and all  
through Reynard's vile tricks.  
If I only get through with my life, he  
verily shall it repent. 250  
Then got he himself on his feet and,  
racked with unbearable pain,  
Limped on for the space of four days, and  
finally came to the court.

The king, setting eyes on the bear as in  
his distress he approached,  
Cried: Merciful God! Is it Bruin I see?  
How is it he comes  
Maltreated like this? And Bruin replied:  
Alas, it is sad,  
The evil on which you now look! Thus me  
has the mischievous knave,  
Reynard, most basely betrayed! Then spake  
in his anger the king:

This outrage I certainly will, without any  
mercy, avenge.

Such a noble as Bruin, in faith, would Reynard  
defy and abuse?

Indeed, by my honor, my crown, I now  
with solemnity swear 260

That Reynard all things shall endure that  
Bruin by law can demand.

If I keep not my word, no sword any more  
will I wear; that I vow!

The king then a mandate sent forth, his  
council together should come,

Consider at once the affair, and a penalty  
fix for the crime.

They all recommended thereon, provided the  
king thought it fit,

That Reynard be summoned anew himself to  
present at the court,

His rights to defend against charge and  
complaint; and Tybert the cat

Forthwith as the herald be sent the order  
to Reynard to take,

Because he is wise and adroit. So counselled they all in accord.

His gracious assent gave the king to that  
which the council advised; 270

And to Tybert he said: Pay attention to all  
that my lords have in view!

Should he for a third time have to be  
called, then shall it to him

And every one of his race for damage  
eternal be held.

He will, if he's wise, come in time. And  
let your monition have point;

Others he only contemns; he listens, however, to you.

Tybert, however, replied: Whether to weal  
or to woe

It tend, when I come where he is, how  
shall I the matter begin?

For me he may do it or not, but still unto  
me it appears

That another could better be sent, for I am  
so little and weak.

Bruin the bear is lusty and strong, yet to  
    master him failed, 280  
What chance of success then have I? Oh,  
    let me, I pray, be excused!

Your pleading convinces me not, responded  
    the king; one may find  
Many a man that is small full of wisdom  
    and craft, which are strange  
To many a one that is big. To a giant you  
    may not have grown,  
But still you are learned and wise. Then  
    yielded the cat and replied:  
Myself I resign to your will, and if I can  
    meet with a sign  
To my right as I go on the road, my  
    journey will be a success. 287

“May God, the indulgent and good, a prosperous eve to you grant.”





## CANTO THREE

When Tybert, the cat, had advanced a short  
way along on his road,

In the distance a ringtail he saw, and soon  
as he spied him he cried:

God speed you, illustrious bird! Oh, turn  
now your pinions and fly

Down here at my right hand side! The  
bird took his flight and disposed

Himself at the left of the cat, to sing on  
the bough of a tree.

Now Tybert was greatly distressed, for ill-  
luck it portended he thought,

But cheered himself up for all that, as many  
are customed to do.

Still towards Malepartus he went, and arri-  
ving, sir Reynard he found

Sitting in front of the house, to whom he  
thus paid his respects:

May God, the indulgent and good, a pros-  
perous eve to you grant; 10

Our monarch has threatened your life if you  
shall refuse any more

With me to proceed to the court; he further  
directs me to say  
That you your accusers must meet, or your  
friends due atonement shall make.  
To this did sir Reynard reply: Dear  
nephew, I welcome you here,  
That you the protection of God may enjoy  
to the full is my wish.  
But different far were the thoughts that  
invaded his treacherous heart;  
New tricks were engaging his mind; this  
messenger too he would send  
Again to the court in disgrace. This not-  
withstanding, the cat  
His nephew he styled, and he said: My  
nephew, what can I provide  
For you in the matter of food? One always  
sleeps better when filled; 20  
I am for the present your host; we will  
travel tomorrow at dawn  
Together to court; this I think will be well.  
Of my relatives all,  
To me is not anyone known upon whom I  
so fully rely.



The brutal and gluttonous bear with insolence me did approach;  
Ill-tempered and strong he is both, and therefore I would not for much  
The journey have risked at his side. But now, as a matter of course,  
With you I shall cheerfully go. In the morning we'll early set out  
On the way, for to me this appears by far the best thing we can do.  
Then Tybert responded to this: Far better for us it would be  
To depart straight away for the court without more ado as we are, 30  
For over the forest is shining the moon and the roads are all dry.  
To this Reynard said: A journey by night I regard as unsafe;  
By day there are many who'll greet us as friends and yet, in the dark  
To fall in our way should they chance, it might not turn out for the best.  
Now Tybert responded in turn: Just tell me, my uncle, I pray,

If here I remain, what then shall we eat?

And Reynard remarked:

But poor is our store, yet if you remain,  
before you I'll set

Good honey all fresh in the comb; I'll pick  
out the clearest there is.

Such stuff I could never endure, ungraciously  
answered the cat,

If naught in the house can be found, then  
give me, I beg you, a mouse; 40

Of food this to me is the best, your honey  
for others pray keep.

Can mice be so toothsome to you? Reynard  
asked, let me honestly know;

I surely can serve you with them. My  
neighbor, the priest, hath a barn

Below in his yard, and within it are mice;  
such numbers, indeed,

That hold them a wagon could not; and  
the priest have I frequently heard

Complain that, by day and by night, to him  
a worse pest they become.

The cat then imprudently said: Oh, do me  
the favor, I beg,

Of leading me straight to the mice! For  
to game and all else of the kind  
The flavor of mice I prefer. And Reynard  
then slyly rejoined:  
In truth you with me shall enjoy a meal  
that is fit for a lord, 50  
And now that I know what for you I can  
get, let us make no delay.

Tybert trustingly followed the fox and came  
to the barn of the priest,  
To its wall which was made out of clay.  
This Reynard had yesterday dug  
Judiciously through and, by means of the  
hole, from the slumbering priest  
Had stolen the best of his cocks; and the  
clergyman's dear little son,  
Young Martin, as he had been named, was  
wishing the theft to avenge;  
For which he in front of the hole had  
fastened a cord with a loop;  
Thus hoping his bird to avenge on the  
thief when again he should come.

Aware was Reynard of this and with it in  
mind he remarked:

My nephew, now crawl through the hole, and  
I will keep guard at the front, 60

Meanwhile look you after the mice, for there  
you will find them in swarms

And readily catch in the dark. Oh, listen  
how gaily they squeak!

When enough you have had, then come  
again back, and join me once more.

We must not from each other this evening  
depart, for tomorrow, you know,

We early set out, and will shorten our way  
with frolicsome talk.

Do you feel assured, said the cat, that here  
it is safe to crawl in?

For sometimes have parsons been found a  
little unchristlike in mind.

Here answered that scoundrel, the fox:  
However could that be found out?

Is it timid you are? Then let us return;  
my dear little wife

Will you with all honor receive, and fur-  
nish a savory meal; 70

If in it no mice can be found still let us  
it joyfully eat.

But Tybert the cat sprang in through the  
hole, for he felt quite abashed

By the bantering words of the fox, and  
straight he fell into the snare.

In this way the guests of sir Reynard a  
bad entertainment received.

Now Tybert, as soon as he felt the tight-  
ening cord at his throat,

Made a start apprehensively back, and flurried  
became through alarm.

Then made a more vigorous jump, and  
tighter the cord was thus drawn.

To Reynard he plaintively called, who then  
with his ear at the hole

Was listing with rancorous joy, and thus  
through the opening spake:

Dear Tybert, how like you the mice? You  
find them, I hope, good and fat; 80

If only young Martin but knew that you  
were consuming his game

He mustard had certainly brought, for he is  
a well-mannered boy.

At court do they sing so at meals? Suspi-  
cious it sounds to my ears.

If could I but Isengrim have just now in  
the hole, as I you

To ruin have managed to bring, he surely  
should pay me for all

The harm that to me he hath done; and  
Reynard thus went on his way.

He went not, however, alone to practice his  
thievish designs;

Adultery, murder, and treason, and theft,  
to him were no sins,

And now he had something on hand for  
himself. To the lovely and fair

Dame Greedimund sought he a visit to pay,  
with a two-fold intent: 90

He hoped from her first to find out exactly  
what Isengrim charged,

And second the villain desired his old  
escapades to renew;

To court had sir Insengrim gone, advantage  
of which he would take;

For none had the shade of a doubt that  
the all too apparent regard

Of his wife for the villainous fox had  
excited the wrath of the wolf.

Reynard entered his mistress's house, but  
failed to find her at home.

God bless you, my little stepchildren, he  
said, no more and no less,

Gave an affable nod to the lads and on to  
his errand he sped.

At morning Dame Greedimund came, as day  
was beginning to break,

And she asked: Has nobody been to  
enquire after me? And they said: 100

Our godfather Reynard is hardly away, and  
you he would see;

His little stepchildren he called us all whom  
he found in the house.

Then shouted Dame Greedimund out: For  
that he shall pay! And ran off

This offense to avenge the very same hour.

She had reason to know

Where he was accustomed to walk. She  
reached him and fiercely began:

Pray, what kind of language is this? What  
sort of outrageous remarks  
Have you, without scruple or shame, in the  
ears of my children pronounced?  
For this you shall certainly pay. Thus  
fiercely she spake and displayed  
A furious face; laid hold of his beard; and  
then let him feel  
The sharpness and strength of her teeth.  
He tried to run out of her way; 110  
She suddenly after him rushed and then  
followed stirring events.  
Not a very long distance away had a castle  
in ruins its place,  
Into which they both hurriedly ran; now,  
by reason of age and decay,  
In the wall at one side of a tower a crack  
could by fortune be seen.  
Through this Reynard managed to slip, but  
not without having to squeeze,  
For narrow and small was the rift; then,  
bulky and plump as she was,  
The wolf stuck her head in the cleft; and  
there having gotten she pressed



And hustled and rooted and shoved, and  
tried to go after the fox,

But only stuck faster within; she could  
neither go on nor retreat.

When Reynard took notice of this, he ran  
to the furthest side, 120

By the tortuous path within, and tried her  
once more to molest.

But she was not wanting for words, she  
rated him well; you behave,

She cried, like a knave and a thief; and  
Reynard responded thereto:

As never has happened before, so may it  
just now come to pass.

Small credit or honor it brings your wife  
through another to spare,

As Reynard was doing just now. To the  
scoundrel no matter was this.

When now, in due process of time, the wolf  
herself freed from the crack,

Was Reynard already away, having gone  
his own path to pursue.

And this made her ladyship think that the  
law she herself would enforce,  
Her honor to guard and preserve, which  
doubly at present was lost. 130

At Tybert now let us once more take a  
look. The poor forlorn chap,  
As soon as he felt himself caught, bewailed  
in the way of a cat  
His distress. This reached little Martin's  
quick ears, and he sprang out of bed.  
Thank God, he exclaimed, the lasso I have  
at a fortunate time  
Suspended in front of the hole, for the  
robber is caught, and I think  
He will have to pay well for the cock.  
Thus did young Martin rejoice,  
Set light to a candle in haste, (the folks in  
the house were asleep),  
His father and mother he woke and all the  
domestics as well,  
And cried: We have captured the fox, so  
let us upon him now wait.

All came, both the little and big; yea, even  
the parson got up 140  
And wrapped in a mantle himself; and  
posted ahead of them all  
His cook with a couple of lights, and Martin  
had hurriedly seized  
A good solid cudgel, with which he devoted  
himself to the cat,  
Dealt blows both on body and head, and  
knocked out in fury an eye.  
And into him all of them pitched; there  
came with a sharp pointed fork  
The priest in great haste to the fray,  
expecting to settle the thief.  
Tybert now thought he should die; then  
raving with madness he sprang  
Between the bare legs of the priest, and  
savagely bit him and scratched;  
He terribly injured the man and avenged  
without mercy his eye.  
The priest with a scream made a rush and  
fell in a faint to the ground. 150  
Unadvisedly chattered the cook, that the  
very old devil himself

Had managed the matter to play her a  
trick; and doubly she swore,  
Yea threefold indeed, how joyfully she  
would have lost, if this harm  
Had not to her master been done, her  
entire little bit of effects.  
Yea, swore that the loss of a treasure of  
gold, if one she possessed,  
She certainly would not regret; she without  
it could very well do.  
Thus bemoaned she her master's disgrace  
and the terrible wounds he'd received.  
At length with full many laments, they laid  
him again on his bed,  
And Tybert they left in the cord where  
him they completely forgot.

When Tybert, the cat, now himself found all  
alone in his woe, 160  
So grievously beaten and covered with  
wounds, and so near unto death,  
He seized, out of sheer love of life, the  
cord and began it to gnaw.

Is there no way to get myself out of this  
horrible scrape? So he thought,  
And carried his point; the cord snapped  
in two. How happy he felt  
As he hastened to flee from the place  
where he so much pain had endured.  
He nimbly escaped from the hole and then  
in a trice made his way  
With speed to the court of the king, and  
on the next morning arrived.  
He angrily chided himself: So the devil  
has yet been obliged  
You, through Reynard's deceit, that traitor  
most vile, to subdue.  
You come again back in disgrace, an eye  
having lost from your head, 170  
And bitterly laden with stripes, how com-  
pletely ashamed you must be.

The wrath of the king waxed heavy and  
hot; with threats he ordained  
That death to the traitor be dealt, without  
any favor or grace;

Then ordered his council convoked. His  
nobles and legal adepts  
Arrived in response to his call, and he  
asked how the miscreant should  
Be finally brought to account, who now had  
so guilty been shown.  
As increasing complaints about Reynard  
were constantly being received,  
Thus Grimbart the badger held forth: In  
this court of justice there are,  
No doubt, a great number of lords who of  
Reynard but evil can think,  
But still to a freeman's just rights must  
violence never be done. 180  
A third time he summoned must be; when  
this has been legally done,  
If he fail his appearance to make, the law  
may him guilty pronounce.  
The monarch responded to this: I fear that  
of all there's not one  
Who would a third summons convey to the  
crafty and treacherous knave;  
For who has more eyes than he wants?  
And who is fool-hardy enough

To endanger his limbs and his life, on  
account of this mutinous scamp?  
To put to such hazard his health, and  
nevertheless at the end  
Reynard fail to arrest? I can think not of  
one who would make the attempt.

The badger replied very loud: Lord King,  
if it please you to make  
A demand such as this upon me, I at once  
will the errand perform, 190  
Let it be whatsoever it may. Officially will  
you me send,  
Or go I as if of myself? You have nothing  
to do but command.  
The king thus assigned him the task: You  
may go! All the charges you've heard,  
As they have together been brought; but  
go you with wisdom to work,  
For he is a dangerous man. And Grimbart  
then said in reply:  
This once I will venture the task, and hope  
that I yet shall him bring.

Thus started he off on the road towards  
Malepartus, the fort.

Reynard he found in the place with wife  
and with children, and said:

Uncle Reynard, I wish you good day! Full  
of learning and wisdom you are,

And judicious regarded as well; we are all  
with astonishment filled 200

That you the behest of the king disregard,  
I may say, even mock.

To you seems it not that the time has  
arrived? Received from all sides

Are constantly growing complaints and evil  
reports. I advise

That you with me come to the court; delay  
will no longer avail.

Already have many complaints been brought  
to the ears of the king,

And the summons I bring you to-day is  
the third that to you has been sent.

Surrender you not, condemned you will be;  
and then will the king

Hither his vassals conduct, and you will  
besiege, and reduce



Malepartus, this stronghold of yours; and  
thus will to ruin be brought  
Your wife and your children and goods, and  
life you will certainly lose. 210  
The king you can never elude, so the very  
best thing you can do  
Is to travel with me to the court. Of cunning  
devices and turns  
You never will want; you have them on  
hand yourself to get free.  
For you have assuredly oft, yea, even when  
present in court,  
Adventures encountered far greater than this,  
and always contrived  
To come from them all with eclat, and  
leave your opponents disgraced.

Thus ended sir Grimbart his speech and  
Reynard responded thereto;  
Dear uncle, you counsel me well, that I  
put in appearance at court  
In person my rights to defend. I earnestly  
hope that the king

Will grant me his grace; he knows of what  
service to him I can be, 220  
And also is fully aware how much I am  
hated for this.  
No court can be held without me. And  
had I yet ten times as much  
Done amiss, still without hesitation I know  
that if I can succeed  
Him to meet to his face and before him to  
plead, he will certainly find  
The ire in his breast overcome. There are  
many, indeed, who attend  
Our monarch day in and day out, and have  
in his council a seat,  
But naught about these does he care; among  
the whole lot can be found  
Neither reason nor sense. At every session,  
however, of court,  
Wherever it is I may be, the decree to  
my wisdom is left.  
When monarch and nobles convene, in critical  
matters of state 230  
To formulate prudent advice, it is Reynard  
who has it to find.

There are many who envy me this; and,  
    alas, I must be on my guard,  
For they've sworn to encompass my death,  
    and the wickedest far of them all  
Just now are together at court, which cer-  
    tainly gives me concern.  
Over ten can I count, and mighty ones too,  
    then how by myself  
Can I such a number withstand? For this  
    have I made such delay.  
I think it, however, now well to accompany  
    you to the court,  
My suit at the bar to defend; this me  
    greater honor will bring  
Than through any slackness of mine my  
    wife and my offspring to plunge  
Into dangers and griefs without end; we  
    every one should be lost,                   240  
For the king is too mighty for me, and be  
    it whatever it may,  
The same must I do so soon as commanded  
    by him; we can try  
To make with our enemies there some use-  
    ful arrangement, perhaps.

Reynard then said to his wife: Look after  
the children, I beg!  
And more than of even the rest, take care  
of the youngest, Reinhart,  
With his fine set of teeth in his dear little  
mouth; I hope that he will  
His father's true image become, and here's  
Rossell, the arch little rogue,  
Who is just as endeared to my heart. For  
both of the children I beg,  
Do the best that you can while I'm gone!  
I will it you amply repay  
Should I luckily come again back, and you  
to my counsel give heed. 250  
With this he departed from thence, attend  
by Grimbart, his friend;  
Left Ermelyn there with both of her sons  
and hurried away;  
He left ill-provided his house, which made  
very anxious his wife.

Not yet a short hour on the road had pro-  
ceeded together the two

When Reynard to Grimbart thus spake:

Dear nephew, most worthy of friends,

To you I'm compelled to avow that I trem-  
ble all over with fear;

I cannot myself get away from the bitter  
and terrible thought

That verily I am pursuing the road to  
my death. Thus I see

My sins all before me displayed, all ever  
committed by me.

You cannot imagine the dread with which  
I now find myself filled. 260

Pray let me confess, give ear to my words,  
for no other priest

Can be hereabouts found, and if a clean  
breast I now make of them all,

No worse on account of the same shall I  
stand in the mind of my king.

Grimbart then said: First you must robbing  
and stealing give up,

All scandalous breaches of faith and other  
accustomed deceits,

Or confession will do you no good. I know  
it, responded the fox,

So let me begin on the spot, and you with  
attention give ear.

Confiteor tibi, Pater et Mater, that I on the  
cat,

The otter, and many besides right numer-  
ous antics have played,

I confess it and freely submit myself to the  
penance entailed. 270

Speak English, the badger replied, whereby  
I may know what you mean.

At this Reynard said: I cannot deny that  
I certainly have

Transgressed against all of the beasts at  
present existing on earth;

For instance, my uncle the bear, whom I  
caught in the limb of a tree,

Whose head was all covered with blood,  
and who was so wounded with blows.

Then Tybert I led after mice, but yet held  
him fast in a cord,

Very much was he forced to endure and  
met with the loss of an eye.

So Henning with reason complained, for  
him of his children I robbed,  
Both little and big as they came, and found  
them quite good to the taste.

I excepted not even the king, and manifold  
capers and tricks 280

With boldness I've played upon him, and  
too on his consort, the queen,  
From which she but lately got well. And  
further I'm bound to confess

That Isengrim have I, the wolf, with  
industry greatly disgraced;

But time have I not the whole to relate.  
I always him called

My uncle, but only in jest, for between us  
no kinship exists.

Now once on a time, nearly six years ago,  
he came to Elkmar,

When there in the convent I lived, to see  
me and ask me for help,

Because he a notion had formed of becoming  
a monk; he thought

It might be a profession for him; so gave  
a good pull at the bell,

And greatly the ringing enjoyed. Thereon  
his front paws I made fast 290  
In the rope that was tied to the bell. He  
did not demur and, thus fixed,  
He pulled and diverted himself, and seemed  
to be learning the bells;  
Yet could not, however, the art but a bad  
reputation him bring,  
For as stupid and crazy he rang, till all of  
the people around  
Collected with haste in dismay from every  
alley and street,  
For certain they felt that a grievous disas-  
ter had come to the town.  
They came and discovered him there, and  
before he could even explain  
His wish to embrace the clerical life, he  
was suddenly caught  
By the surging and furious crowd, and  
almost was beaten to death.  
Yet still did the fool in his purpose persist,  
and even implored 300  
That I with due honor would see that a  
tonsure for him was procured;



I therefore had cut the hair on his crown  
and so thoroughly singed  
That frizzled with heat was the skin and  
parched as a pea that is baked.  
Thus often for him I prepared hard cuffs,  
severe kicks, and disgrace.  
And I taught him the way to catch fish,  
which never do with him agree.  
He followed me once to the border of  
France, when jointly we stole  
To the house where a parson abode, the  
richest of all thereabouts.  
This parson a storehouse possessed with a  
number of savory hams,  
Of bacon some long tender sides he kept  
there for curing as well,  
And likewise a tub full of meat but recently  
placed in the brine. 310  
Now Isengrim managed, at length, in the  
wall, which of stone was composed,  
A hole of some measure to scratch, through  
which he might easily go.  
I jogged him along at the work, his avarice  
also him urged;

But amid the profusion he found he could  
not restrain his desires,  
But stuffed without measure himself, by  
reason of which did the cleft  
Put a powerful curb on his much swollen  
frame and checked his return.  
• Oh! how he denounced the perfidious thing,  
that allowed him to pass  
When hungry within, but would not permit  
him when filled to go back!  
Thereon in the village I raised a hubbub  
and outcry so great  
That soon I excited the folk to look for  
the trail of the wolf; 320  
Then ran to the clergyman's house, and  
came on him having a meal,  
Just as before him was placed a capon,  
young, tender, and cooked  
To a T, so upon it I swooped and carried  
it off in my mouth.  
Up jumped the good priest with a scream,  
and after me tried to pursue,  
And the table knocked over with all that  
was on it to eat and to drink.

Catch and belabor him well; kick him out,  
cried the furious priest,  
Then cooled off his wrath in a pool that  
lay unobserved in his way,  
Wherein he now floundered full length; and  
people rushed in crying: Strike!  
At this I ran off from the place and after  
me all in a crowd  
Who to me the most venomous felt. The  
parson was heard above all: 330  
The bold and audacious thief! he took from  
my table the fowl!  
Then ran I as fast as I could until I  
arrived at the barn,  
And there, much against my desire, I let  
the bird slip to the earth,  
As I, to my grief, too heavy it found; and  
thus to the crowd  
I was lost, but the fowl was regained, and  
as the priest raised it aloft  
Became he aware of the wolf in the barn,  
and the crowd saw him too.  
The father now called to them all: Come  
quickly and pummel him well;

To our hands has a different thief, a wolf,  
    been delivered instead;  
Away should he get, disgraced we should be,  
    and truly would all  
Be laughing at our expense from the east  
    to the west of the land. 340  
The wolf some hard thinking now did;  
    upon him fell blows like the rain,  
On his body in every part, and inflicted  
    most torturing wounds.  
All shouted as loud as they could, and the  
    men who behind had been left  
In a body together rushed up and felled him  
    for dead to the earth.  
He never, so long as he'd lived, had met  
    with affliction so great;  
If one should on canvass it paint, it very  
    astounding would be  
To notice how he the good priest repaid  
    for his bacon and hams.  
They bundled him out on the road and  
    seized him and dragged him pellmell  
Through hedges and ditches and mud, till  
    in him no life could be traced;

He made himself dirty and foul, and hence,  
with abhorrence and hate, 350  
He out of the village was cast, and left in  
a deep filthy pool,  
They thinking at last he was dead. In such  
ignominious swoon  
I know not how long he remained, ere he  
conscious became of his woe;  
And how after all he got off, that too have  
I never found out.  
And yet not long since (it may be a year)  
he swore that to me  
Ever faithful and true he would be, but  
this did not last very long.  
Now why he did thus to me swear I was  
able with ease to conceive.  
I came on him once when he wished his  
fill of some fowls to procure;  
And, so as to play him a trick, I pictured  
with clearness and care  
A beam upon which, as a rule, a cock in  
the evening would roost, 360  
With seven fat hens at his side. I guided  
him then to the place.

In stillness and darkness of night, as twelve  
by the clock had been struck;  
The sash of the window, I knew, was raised  
with a thin piece of wood,  
And stood ready open for use, so in I pre-  
tended to go,  
But then I surrendered my place, and my  
uncle I asked to go first,  
And said: Proceed boldly within; on well-  
fattened hens you will come.  
If you your fair lady would win, you must  
never faint-hearted become.  
Very cautiously crawled he inside and groped  
with the greatest of care  
Hither and thither about, and at length he  
indignantly said:  
Oh, how you have led me astray! Of fowls,  
in good truth, I can find 370  
Not a feather. I said: The birds that in  
front were accustomed to sit  
Myself I have carried away, the others are  
further behind;  
Without hesitation go on and mind that  
with caution you step.

The beam was undoubtedly small on which  
we so carefully walked,  
Yet I kept him in front and myself well  
behind; then backwards I made  
My way through the window again, and  
gave a good tug at the wood;  
Down came the sash with a bang, and the  
wolf made a start of alarm;  
In shaking he fell from the beam and came  
in a heap to the ground.  
Now, affrighted, the people awoke, who all  
were asleep by the fire.  
What fell in the window? they cried, in  
direst confusion and fear; 380  
Without loss of time they arose; and, speed-  
ily lighting the lamp,  
Him down in the corner they found, and  
struck him and polished his skin  
To the fullest extent of their strength; it  
surprises me how he escaped.

Still further to you I confess, that I to  
dame Greedimund oft

In secret have gone, and openly too. Now  
certainly that  
Ought not to have ever occurred, and I  
wish I had left it undone,  
For, live she as long as she may, her  
shame she will scarcely repair.

I now have confessed to you all that,  
endeavor as much as I may,  
I am able to bring to my mind, and it  
heavily weighs on my soul.  
Absolve me, I pray you, therefrom, and  
meekly be sure that I will 390  
All penance perform to its end, no matter  
how much you impose.

Already to Grimbart 'twas known how he  
in such case should proceed;  
He broke off a twig on the way, and said:  
Strike, uncle, yourself  
Three times on the back with this twig,  
and then put it carefully down,



In the manner I show, on the earth and  
as many times over it jump;  
With meekness then kissing the twig your-  
self fitly dutiful show;  
Such is the penance I lay upon you, and  
pronounce you from all  
Your sins and all chastisements free and dis-  
charged. I fully forgive  
You all in the name of the Lord, whatever  
it be you have done.

When Reynard the penance enjoined had  
duly performed to the end, 400  
Then Grimbart most solemnly said: My  
uncle, let now in good works  
Be clear your repentance to all; the psalms  
also read and attend  
The churches with zeal, and fast on the  
days appointed by law.  
To him who may ask show clearly the way  
and give to the poor  
Without stint, and unto me swear your  
infamous life to forsake;

All plundering, robbing, and theft, seduction and treason avoid,  
For certain it is that by this you alone  
will to mercy attain.  
Then Reynard replied: I will do as you  
say, I pledge you my word.

Thus was the shrift at an end, and then  
they continued their way  
To palace and court of the king; the saintly  
Grimbart and he 410  
Then threaded a blackish and fertile expanse,  
where a convent they saw  
On the right hand side of the road, in  
which holy women engaged  
In serving of God from morning to night,  
and kept in their yard  
Of cocks a great number and hens and  
many fine capons as well,  
Who wandered at times for their food a  
distance outside of the wall,  
Where Reynard had called on them oft.  
So now unto Grimbart he said:

Our speediest way is to pass along by the  
side of this wall.

But set were his thoughts on the fowls,  
how they were out taking the air.

So there his confessor he led, till near to  
the birds they approached;

Then the scamp to and fro in his head set  
rolling his covetous eyes. 420

He was pleased above all with a cock, in  
splendid condition and young,

Which firmly he fixed in his eye, as he  
strutted astern of the rest;

Behind him he hastily sprang, and the  
feathers a-flying began.

Indignantly Grimbart reproved the shameful  
relapse of the fox:

Base nephew, behave you like this, and  
would you already again

Make a sinful attack on a fowl so soon  
after you have been shrived?

Such penitence seems to me fine! And  
Reynard to Grimbart replied:

Dear uncle, if even in thought I such a  
thing can have done,  
Then pray unto God that he may in mercy  
forgive me the sin.  
I gladly forbear and never will do so again.  
Then they went 430  
Round about by the convent again to their  
road, and thus were obliged  
To cross a diminutive bridge, and Reynard  
behind him cast eyes  
A second time after the fowls; he could not  
himself keep in check;  
Had anyone cut off his head, without any  
question it would  
Have flown in pursuit of the birds, so vehe-  
ment was his desire.

Grimbart observed this and cried: Where let  
you, my nephew, your eyes  
Again wend their way? Of a truth, an  
odious glutton you are!  
Said Reynard, much pained, in reply: My  
uncle, you do me a wrong;



“Had any one cut off his head, without any question it would  
Have flown in pursuit of the birds.”

Do not so excited become, and disturb not,  
I beg you, my prayers,

But a paternoster allow me me to say, for  
the souls of the fowls 440

And geese are in need of the same, as many  
as I from the nuns,

Those heaven-born women, have filched, by  
use of my prudence and skill.

Grimbart said not a word, and the fox  
turned his head not away from the fowls

So long as in sight they remained. They  
managed, however, at length,

The road they had left to regain and began  
to draw near to the court;

And as Reynard the castle observed, in  
which dwelt his master the king,

He inwardly troubled became, for the charges  
against him were grave. 447



## CANTO FOUR.

When rumour got spread at the court that  
Reynard was coming indeed,  
To see him all hurried outside, both noble  
and common alike,  
And few of them friendly disposed; nearly  
all had complaints to prefer.  
But Reynard undoubtedly thought that this  
no significance had;  
At least so he carried himself, as with  
Grimbart the badger he came,  
This moment with boldness and grace, along  
through the principal street.  
Courageous and calm he advanced, as if, of  
a truth, he had been  
Own son and true heir of the king, and  
free and devoid of all fault;  
Yea! thus before Leo he stepped, and took  
in the palace his place  
Right up in the midst of the lords; he knew  
how to feign unconcern.



Illustrious king and worshipful lord, he began  
to declaim,

Most noble and mighty you are, foremost in  
merit and rank;

I therefore you humbly entreat to hear me  
with justice today.

Of your majesty's servitors all, not a soul  
more devoted than I

Has ever been found; this without hesitation  
I dare to maintain;

And many I know at the court, who would  
gladly oppress me for that.

To me would your friendship be lost, if now,  
my enemies wish,

The lies they disseminate should, perchance,  
to you credible seem.

But you, as is lucky for me, investigate  
every complaint.

As fully accused as accusers you hear; and,  
though they have told 20

Many falsehoods behind my back, yet tran-  
quil I rest and reflect

That well you my loyalty know, which  
brings persecution on me.

Be silent! responded the king, no prattle  
or fawning will help;  
Your iniquities din in our ears, and punish-  
ment now you awaits.  
Regard have you had for the peace, that I  
to the beasts have proclaimed  
And sworn to maintain? There stands the  
cock! His children have you,  
Malicious and treacherous thief, one after  
another destroyed!  
And for me the depth of your love, you  
wish, I presume, to evince  
When you my authority spurn, and my  
servants so grossly abuse!  
The health of poor Tybert's destroyed, and  
by slow and distressing degrees 30  
Will the suffering bear get well of the  
wounds inflicted by you.  
But I will you not further reproach, for  
here are accusers enough,  
And acts that are proved to the hilt; you  
hardly this time can escape.

Am I, most benevolent sire, for this to be  
guilty adjudged?

Reynard said. Do I incur blame if Bruin,  
with blood-covered crown,

Came limping again to you back? If he  
took the risk, and presumed

On Rüsteviel's honey to feed, and the half-  
witted peasants against

Him lifted their hands, yet still is he strong  
and enormous of limb.

If they blows and abuse on him cast, ere  
into the water he ran,

He could, as a vigorous man, the onset  
with ease have repelled. 40

And also, if Tybert the cat, whom I with  
due honor received

And treated as well as I could, from steal-  
ing could not himself keep,

But into the house of the priest, although I  
him faithfully warned,

Went sneaking when night had set it, and  
there made acquaintance with grief,

Have I retribution deserved because he be-  
haved like a fool?

Too near to your princely crown, indeed,  
would the consequence lie!

With me, to be sure, you can deal in accord  
with your sovereign will,

And, clear as the case may appear, may  
give what decision you please,

Whether be it to weal or be it to woe the  
matter may tend.

If I'm to be roasted or boiled, if I'm to be  
blinded or hanged, 50

Or beheaded indeed, I am perfectly willing  
that so it be done.

We are all in the grasp of your power,  
completely are we in your hands;

For you are majestic and strong, how then  
can the helpless resist?

If you put me to death, by that, of a  
truth, very little you gain.

Let happen, however, what may, I loyally  
yield to the law.

Then Bellyn the ram began to remark:  
The time has arrived

To advance our complaints. And then with  
his relatives, Tybert the cat  
And Bruin the bear, and a legion of beasts,  
lord Isengrim came;  
Also Baldwin the ass and Lampen the hare  
presented themselves;  
And Nidget the puppy appeared, with the  
bulldog Rhyn and the doe, 60  
Named Metke, with Herman the buck; and  
squirrel and weasel, as well  
As the ermine, were added thereto. Nor  
did either the ox or the horse  
Neglect to be there. Near by could be  
seen the beasts of the chase,  
Among them the stag and the roe; and  
Bockert the beaver came too,  
With marten and rabbit and boar; together  
they all crowded in;  
Bartolt the stork and Pica the jay and  
Grusley the crane  
Came flying across with Tibke the duck  
and Alheid the goose;  
And others besides came hurrying in with  
their troubles and woes.

Henning, the grief-stricken cock, with his  
children, now but a few,  
Made bitter complaint; and hither there  
came without number the birds, 70  
And a concourse so great of the beasts that  
no one could mention their names.  
All made an attack on the fox, and hoped  
that his many misdeeds  
They now into question might bring, and  
inflicted his punishment see.  
In front of the monarch they pressed, with  
vehement, furious speech;  
Charges on charges they heaped, and narra-  
tives ancient and new  
Introduced. In one single sitting of court  
there never had been  
Brought up to the throne of the king, so  
many complaints to be heard.  
His place Reynard took and proceeded with  
skill his defence to conduct.  
He began his address, and forth from his  
mouth the eloquent words  
Of his justification outflowed, as if they  
were obvious truth. 80

He was master of what to present and what  
to say nothing about;

And his auditors all were amazed, and  
thought he was innocent shown.

He even had claims of his own to put in,  
and charges to make.

At length there rose up to their feet some  
genuine, trustworthy men,

Who posted themselves by the fox, against  
him their evidence gave,

And all of his wickedness clearly made  
known. That settled the case,

For then, with unanimous voice, the court  
of the king resolved

That Reynard the fox was worthy of death;  
that he should be seized,

Imprisoned and hanged by the neck, in  
order that he be compelled

For his infamous crimes to atone with an  
ignominious death. 90

Just now did Reynard himself consider the  
game as all up.

Not very much good had been done by his  
cunning harangue. The king  
Pronounced sentence himself: and then was  
the criminal's pitiful end,  
As him they imprisoned and bound, paraded  
in sight of his eyes.

As Reynard there stood, shackled according  
to sentence and law,  
His foes were bestirring themselves to lead  
him at once to his death;  
But his friends stood about in dismay, quite  
overcome with their grief,  
Grimbart and Martin the ape, with others  
of kin to the fox.  
The sentence with umbrage they heard, and  
all were more filled with regret  
Than expected might be; for Reynard of  
barons was one of the chief: 100  
And there he now stood, of all of his  
honors and offices stripped  
And doomed to a shameful death. How now  
must the scene they surveyed



His kinsmen have cut to the quick! In a  
body together they took  
Their leave of the king, and withdrew from  
the court, to the last that was there.

The monarch, however, it vexed, that so  
many knights should depart  
From him thus. It now could be seen how  
great was the crowd of his kin  
Who had gone, in their great discontent at  
Reynard's impending doom.  
And thus did his majesty speak to one of  
his trustiest friends:  
Undoubtedly Reynard is vile; we must, for  
all that, bear in mind  
That many relations he has, who cannot be  
spared from the court. 110

But Isengrim, Bruin, and Tybert the cat,  
all three of them were  
About the poor captive at work; impatient  
the infamous death,

As awarded had been by the king, to  
execute now on their foe;  
So hurriedly dragged him outside, and the  
gallows beheld from afar.  
And now the tom-cat to the wolf began, in  
his fury, to speak:  
Consider, lord Isengrim, well, how Reynard  
once schemed in all ways,  
And everything did that he could, and suc-  
ceeded, too, in his hate,  
On the gallows your brother to see. How  
joyously marched he along  
With him to the place of his doom!  
Neglect not to pay him the debt.  
And remember, sir Bruin as well, how  
shamefully you he betrayed, 120  
Below there in Rüsteviel's yard, to the  
boorish and furious clowns,  
Male and female alike, and scurvily left  
you to wounds and to blows,  
And the shame thereupon that ensued,  
which now in all regions is known.  
Take care and your efforts unite, for if he  
escape us to-day,

And freedom contrive to procure, by his  
    wit and insidious arts,  
A time for our precious revenge will never  
    be granted again;  
So let us make haste and avenge the  
    wrongs he has done to us all.

Then Isengrim said: What use are your  
    words? Go, bring me at once  
A reliable cord; with that we will soon put  
    him out of his pain!  
Thus spake they ill of the fox and jour-  
    neyed along on the road. 130

In silence heard Reynard their words; at  
    length he, however, began:  
Since me you so bitterly hate, and thirst  
    for a deadly revenge,  
I am greatly surprised that you seem not  
    to know how to bring it about!  
Your Tybert is fully informed where a good  
    trusty rope may be found,

For he did it most carefully test, when into  
the house of the priest  
He thrust himself in after mice, and did  
not with honor return.  
But, Isengrim, you and the bear are mak-  
ing such terrible haste  
Your uncle to bring to his end, of course  
you intend to succeed.

The monarch arose from his seat, with all  
the noblesse of his court,  
The sentence to see carried out; and also  
was present the queen, 140  
Who with the procession had come, by her  
ladies escorted in state;  
And behind them a multitude flocked, com-  
posed of the poor and the rich,  
All wishing for Reynard's decease, and hop-  
ing to see it take place.  
Isengrim uttered meanwhile a word to his  
kinsmen and friends,  
Exhorting them all to be sure compactly  
together to hold,

And keep on the manacled fox a steady and  
vigilant eye;

For they were in constant dread of the  
shrewd fellow's getting away.

The wolf, above all, commanded his wife:

If you set any store

On your life, take heed to my words and  
help us the rascal to hold!

If he manage to get himself free, we all  
are involved in disgrace. 150

And further to Bruin he said: Bethink  
how he held you in scorn!

With usury now can you pay the whole of  
your debt to him back.

Tybert is able to climb, and above shall he  
fasten the rope.

You hold him and give me your help, and  
I will the ladder remove;

Then all, in a minute or two, with this  
knave will be brought to an end.

Said the bear: Put the ladder in place, and  
I will him certainly hold.

See now, Reynard said when they'd done,  
how exceedingly busy you are  
In leading your uncle to death! I should  
think you would rather him guard  
And protect; and, in his distress, would  
some little pity display;  
I gladly for mercy would beg, but what  
should I profit by that? 160  
Isengrim hates me o'ermuch; yea, even  
his wife he has told  
To hold me and see to it well that the  
way of escape is cut off.  
Should she but reflect on the past, then  
could she not injure me now;  
But if I am doomed to be slain, I earnestly  
wish that it might  
Be speedily done. My father too came into  
frightful distress,  
But yet at the last it was quick. There  
attended, I know, at his death  
Not quite such a number as here. If  
longer, however, you mean  
Me to keep in suspense, then must it in  
truth redound to your shame.

Do you hear, said Bruin the bear, how  
boldly the vagabond talks?

Come on! String him up out of hand!  
The time for his end has arrived. 170

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Earnestly now did Reynard reflect: Oh!  
could I but think,

At once, of some artifice new, to aid me  
in this urgent need,

Whereby might the king, in his grace, with  
clemency grant me my life,

And these, my implacable foes, all three,  
into shame might be thrown!

Of all let me think, and then must things  
shift for themselves, for here

Is in question my neck! Not a moment to  
lose! How shall I escape?

Evils of all kinds upon me are heaped.  
The king is displeased,

My friends are all melted away, and matters  
controlled by my foes.

I have rarely done anything good, and even  
the might of the king,

As well as his council's advice, have I truly  
but little esteemed. 180  
I am guilty of much that is wrong, and  
yet my ill-luck have I hoped,  
Each time, to avert. Had I but the  
chance to say a few words,  
I surely should then not be hanged; I  
will not abandon the hope.

His back to the ladder he turned, with face  
to the people below,  
And cried: Before me I see the grim figure  
of death, and can him  
Not escape. And now from you all, as  
many as hear me, I beg  
But a little extension of time, before I  
depart from the earth.  
Indeed I should very much like, to you my  
confession sincere  
To publicly make for the last time on  
earth, and truly disclose  
Whatever of harm I have done, so that to  
another, perchance, 190





“Indeed, I should very much like, to you my confession sincere,  
To publicly make, for the last time on earth.”

May not, in the future, be laid this criminal action or that,  
Till now unsuspected by you, but done  
under cover by me;  
That I may thereby, at the last, much evil  
prevent, and may hope  
That God, in his fullness of grace, will  
remember me now in my need.

A number to pity were moved, and one to  
another they said:

Small is the favor and short the reprieve.

They petitioned the king,

And the king conceded their prayer. Then  
again did Reynard become

A little more lightsome of heart, and hoped  
for a happy result;

The granted occasion he turned to account,  
and as follows he spake:

Spiritus Domini, come to my aid! Not  
one do I see, 200

In all the vast concourse that's here, whom  
I have not some time ill-used.

First, I was yet but a youngster small, and  
the breast of my dam  
Had hardly forgotten to suck, when my  
passions I followed unchecked  
Among the young lambs and the goats  
that, a distance apart from the flock,  
At play were dispersed in the fields; their  
dear bleating voices I heard  
Too gladly by far, as a craving I got for  
more delicate food,  
And soon their acquaintance I made. One  
lambkin I slew with my teeth,  
And drank up its blood; it tasted so good  
that I killed and devoured  
Also four of the youngest goats, and thus  
further training obtained.  
I exempted no kind of a bird, not a fowl,  
nor a duck, nor a goose, 210  
On which I might light, and have in the  
sand full many entombed,  
When all that I harried to death I did  
not desire to consume.

It afterwards happened one winter to me,  
on the banks of the Rhine,  
That Isengrim came I to know, who was  
lurking aback of the trees.

He assured me, without losing time, that I  
was a kinsman of his;

Indeed on his fingers he could the precise  
degrees of the tie

Call over to me. I gave my assent, an  
alliance we formed,

And each to the other engaged as trusty  
companions to roam.

Ah, many an evil thereby was I doomed  
to prepare for myself!

Together we went through the land; while  
he stole the big on our way, 220

And I stole the small. Whate'er we  
obtained was common to be;

But common indeed it was not, he parted  
it just as he chose;

A half I have never received. Yea, worse  
have I suffered than this;

If he managed a calf to purloin, or get  
for his booty a ram,

If I found him at table with more than  
enough, or consuming a goat  
Just recently done to its death; if a buck  
in the grasp of his claws,  
Despite of its struggles, was held, at me  
he would grin and look sour,  
Till growling he drove me away, my share  
to retain for himself.  
It always turned out with me thus, no  
matter the size of the joint  
He had got. Indeed, if to pass it should  
come that, in company, we 230  
Should manage to capture an ox, or our-  
selves possess of a cow,  
At once made appearance his wife and  
seven young cubs on the scene,  
Who then would lay hold of the prey, and  
crowd me away from the meal.  
Not even a rib could I get; so polished  
and dry were they gnawed,  
That nothing like meat could be found;  
and I must contented appear.  
But heaven, however, be praised, I suffered  
not hunger thereby.



From that splendid treasure of mine I kept  
myself privately fed,  
By means of the silver and gold, that  
securely I keep in a place  
Not easily found. Therein have I all I  
can want; for, in truth,  
No wagon could bear it away, if it seven  
times went to the task. 240

The king paid attention thereto, as mention  
was made of this wealth,  
Inclined himself forward and asked: From  
whence did it come to your hands?  
Speak out and at once! The treasure I  
mean! And then Reynard said:  
This secret from you I will not conceal,  
what good could it do?  
For naught of these costly things with me  
can I take when I go.  
Since then you are pleased to command, I  
will all to you truly relate;  
For out it assuredly must; since, whether  
for evil or good,

A secret so weighty indeed could not be  
much longer concealed;  
For the treasure was stolen, forsooth. With  
oaths had a number conspired  
To kill you, beneficent king, and if, at the  
very same hour, 250  
The treasure had not with prudence been  
moved, it thus had occurred.  
Take notice of this, gracious lord, for both  
your well-being and life  
On the treasure's security hung; and, alas,  
the purloining thereof  
Made things with my father go hard; it  
led him, in prime of his life,  
The last dreadful journey to take; to eter-  
nal perdition, perhaps;  
But, merciful master, for you it all turned  
out for the best.

Perplexedly listened the queen to all of  
this horrible tale,  
The intricate, furtive design for depriving  
her consort of life,



The treason, the treasure, and all that, he  
had been telling about.

I caution you, Reynard, she cried, reflect!  
for about to embark 260

You are on the road to your home;  
repentant, disburden your soul;

Set forth the unvarnished truth and plainly  
the murder make known.

The king supplemented her words: Strict  
silence let every one keep!

Come, Reynard again here below and step  
now up nearer to me,

Whereby I may hear what you say, for the  
matter concerneth myself.

Reynard, who saw through it all, took  
courage again, and the rounds

Of the ladder he quickly ran down, to the  
malcontents' heavy chagrin;

And himself, without more ado, by the  
king and his consort he placed,

Who earnestly tried to find out the mean-  
ing of all he had said.

He then set himself to make up some new  
and astonishing lies. 270  
That I the good will of the king and that  
of his consort, he thought,  
Again could secure; and oh, that my cunning  
at once would prevail,  
And render me able my foes, who me are  
conducting to death,  
Themselves to destruction to bring; this me  
from all peril would save.  
For me this would certainly be a blessing  
from out of the skies;  
But lies without measure, I see, to carry  
my purpose I need.

Impatiently then did the queen to Reynard  
more questions propound;  
Let us know, without any mistake, of what  
the whole matter consists.  
The truth let us know, your conscience  
respect, disburden your soul!  
Reynard responded thereto: I gladly will  
tell to you all. 280

Death alone is awaiting me now, and nothing can remedy that.

Should I, at the end of my life, my soul overburden with lies,

And eternal damnation incur, I should act as if out of my mind.

It is better for me to confess; and if, to my sorrow, I must

My cherished relations and friends arraign and put under a cloud,

How can I help it, alas! At hand are the torments of hell.

Already the king, as he listened intently to what had been said,

Full heavy at heart had become. He said:  
Are you telling the truth?

To his majesty Reynard replied, with air for the purpose assumed:

I'm an infamous fellow, I know, yet now am I speaking the truth. 290

What good could I get by telling you lies?  
I should only myself

Everlastingly damn. You know very well,  
for so it's resolved,  
I must die; I am now looking death in the  
face and lie will I not;  
Neither evil nor good to me now can be of  
the slightest avail.  
He shook as he uttered these words, and  
seemed on the verge of a swoon.

The queen then compassionate spake: I  
pity the anguish he feels;  
Deign kindly upon him to look, I beg you,  
my lord, and reflect;  
We both may be saved from much harm by  
this revelation of his.  
The sooner the better that we the ground  
of his narrative find!  
Strict silence enforce upon all, and let him  
straightforwardly speak. 300  
Then issued the king his command, and  
all the assembly was still;  
But Reynard uplifted his voice: If it please  
you my gracious king,

Pray listen to what I shall say. Although  
my narration may chance  
Without any notes to be made, yet exact  
you will find it and true;  
The details you'll learn of the plot, and no  
one intend I to spare. 305

## CANTO FIVE.

Now notice the cunning displayed, and see  
how the fox went to work  
To hide his offences once more, and harm  
unto others to do.  
Gratuitous lies he devised, yea, even his  
father defamed  
On the further side of the grave; and the  
badger he grossly traduced,  
His loyallest friend, who had so persistently  
come to his aid.  
There was nothing he scrupled to say, by  
which his narration he thought  
He might plausible make; that on his  
accusers he vengeance might take.

And this is the way he began: My father  
once had the good luck,  
Not very long since, the wealth of king  
Emmrich, the mighty, to find 10  
In a secret place; yet to him was the  
hoard of but little avail.

He gave himself airs on account of his  
wealth, esteeming no more  
The beasts of his own degree, and his  
comrades of former times  
Too little regarding by far; more notable  
friends he desired.  
Tybert the cat he despatched to the wild  
hunting grounds of Ardennes,  
Bruin the bear to seek out, to whom he  
should fealty swear,  
And summon to Flanders forthwith, in order  
their king to become.

When Bruin the writing had read, its im-  
port him heartily pleased:  
Untiring and bold he pursued his way on  
to Flanders in haste,  
For with something like this had his mind  
already for long been engaged.  
Arriving he found my father on hand, who  
hailed him with joy, 20  
And at once off to Isengrim sent, and like-  
wise to Grimbart, the sage;

The four put together their heads, discussed  
and perfected their plans,  
And not far away was a fifth, namely  
Tybert, the cat. Near at hand  
Lay a village which Iste is called, and this  
was the actual place,  
A spot between Iste and Ghent. where  
jointly the plot they discussed  
The whole of a long cloudy night, which  
kept their assemblage concealed.  
With God met they not, for my father,  
the devil more rightly to say,  
Them totally had in his power, with his  
damnable treasure of gold.  
They resolved on the death of the king,  
and one to the other they swore  
An alliance eternal and firm, and then did  
the five take their oath 30  
In conjunction on Isengrim's head, that  
unitedly they would select  
Bruin the bear for their king; and at Aix-  
la-chapelle, on the throne,  
With aid of the golden crown, the realm  
to him firmly secure.



This having been done, if by one of the  
king's relations or friends  
Resistance thereto should be made, my father  
was him to convince  
Or tempt with a bribe; and, failing in that,  
to eject him at once.  
I happened to learn of the scheme, for  
Grimbart one morning himself  
Full merrily drunken had got, and garrulous  
had become.  
Thus went the fool home to his wife and  
gave the whole secret away;  
Then silence upon her enjoined, thus think-  
ing the matter to mend. 40  
Very soon after this had occurred, my  
wife she encountered, and her  
Must she, by a sacred oath, in the regal  
trinity's name,  
Pledge on her honor and faith that, whether  
come evil or good,  
To no one a word would she tell; and then  
she made known to her all.  
In like manner too, has my wife as little  
her promise observed,

For, soon as she found where I was, she  
told to me all she had heard;  
And gave me, moreover, a sign, whereby  
the full truth of the tale  
I with ease recognized; yet through it I've  
only more evil incurred.  
It reminded me well of the frogs, the con-  
tinual croaking of whom  
Ascended, at length, to the ears of our  
Lord in the heavens above. 50

They, wishing the rule of a king, were  
willing to live in restraint,  
After having their freedom enjoyed in all  
the domains of the earth.  
Their petition was granted by God; he sent  
them as monarch the stork,  
Who steadily hates and maltreats and allows  
them no peace to enjoy.  
As a fiend he himself to them bears; and  
wailing the fools are to-day,  
But ah, it's too late! The king has them  
now altogether subdued.

Reynard to all of the crowd spoke at the  
top of his voice:

All could well hear what he said; and thus  
he continued his speech:

Observe! My fears were excited for all, lest  
so it should turn.

Your highness, I looked out for you and  
hoped for a better reward. 60

Of Bruin's intrigues I'm aware, and the  
villainous turn of his mind,

As also his many misdeeds; and the worst  
I provided against.

Should he become king, we all to destruc-  
tion together should go.

Our king is of noble descent, and mighty  
and gracious he is,

I privately thought; a mournful exchange  
indeed it would be,

A dull, good-for-nothing, unprincipled bear  
to exalt in this way.

I studied it over for weeks, and tried the  
whole plot to defeat.

To me it was clear above all that, if in  
the hands of my sire  
The treasure continued to be, he then could  
large forces collect,  
And surely the game he would win, while  
we of our king should be shorn. 70  
My care was now centered on this: to  
search and discover the spot  
Wherein was the treasure concealed, and  
stealthily take it away.  
Should my father run off to the field, or  
the crafty old fellow depart  
To the forest, by day or by night, in frost  
or in tropical heat,  
In sunshine or rain, I was always behind  
and tracking his steps.

Once as I lay in the earth hidden with  
care and with thoughts  
Of how I the treasure could find, so much  
about which I had learned,  
Then and there I my father espied, as out  
of a cranny he stole;

Among the stones he advanced, and up  
from below he emerged.

In silence I kept myself hid; he thought  
he was all by himself, 80

Scanned the whole field of his view and  
then, as he no one perceived,

In the distance or near, his game he began,  
and you shall it learn.

Again he put sand in the hole, and skill-  
fully made it agree

In level and looks with the rest of the  
ground. No one, who had not

Seen it done, could possibly know it was  
there. And step after step

As he went, he saw that the spot upon  
which he had planted his feet

Should over and over again be thoroughly  
brushed with his tail;

And then did away with his trail by rak-  
ing about with his mouth.

In this my first lesson I took from my wily  
old father that day,

Who versatile was in dodges and tricks and  
pranks of all kinds. 90

This having been done, he hurried away to  
his task, and I thought  
The princely treasure, perhaps, may be in  
neighborhood kept.  
I quickly stepped up to the place, and  
promptly proceeded to work;  
And the rift, in a very short time, I managed to pierce with my paws.  
Then crept I impatiently in, and heaps of  
things priceless I found,  
Of the finest of silver a store and gold  
that was red; of a truth  
Has never the oldest one here his eyes  
such a hoard laid upon.  
Myself I now set to my task with the aid  
of my wife; we dragged  
And we carried by day and by night; we  
had neither barrow nor cart;  
Much labor it therefore entailed and many  
an hour of fatigue. 100  
Faithfully held dame Ermelyn out, and we  
managed at length  
To get all the jewels in safety away and  
conveyed to a place

That to us more suitable seemed. Mean-  
while kept my father himself  
Daily in contact with those who our king  
were in league to betray.  
Now what they resolved you shall hear and  
greatly amazed you will be.

Straight Bruin and Isengrim sent to many  
departments and lands  
Patents the hirelings to call, who were  
ordered in numbers to come  
And promptly themselves to report; then  
Bruin their posts would assign,  
And even indulgently give the fellows their  
pay in advance.  
My father then traversed the lands display-  
ing the letters he had, 110  
Sure of his treasure that still, he thought,  
in its hiding-place lay.  
But now it had so come about that, if he,  
with all of his friends,  
Had ever so thoroughly searched, they  
would not a penny have found.

For him was no labor too great, and nim-  
bly his way he pursued  
Through every land to be found between  
the Elbe and the Rhine.  
Many hirelings he'd already found, and  
many another he gained,  
For money was able to lend an emphasis  
strong to his words.

At length did the summer arrive, and now  
did my father return  
To his fellow-conspirators back. Then had  
he of sorrows and want  
And terrible woes to relate, especially how  
he almost 120  
His life down in Saxony lost, as among the  
castles he roamed,  
Where huntsmen with horses and hounds  
him daily pursued, insomuch  
That barely made he his escape, and then  
with his pelt scarcely whole.

Arriving, he joyfully showed the four arch-  
traitors the list



Of the comrades that he had secured by  
means of his pledges and gold.

Bruin rejoiced at the news, as the five in  
conjunction it read.

Its import was this: Twelve hundred of  
Isengrim's relatives bold,

With ravenous mouths and sharp-set teeth  
in their heads were to come,

And the cats and the bears besides were all  
for sir Bruin assured.

The gluttons and badgers as well, Thuringian  
and Saxon, would come; 130

Collected, however, they were on this under-  
standing alone,

That pay for a month in advance should  
be had. Then all in return

Forward would come in their might as soon  
as command was received.

God be eternally thanked that I on their  
schemes shut the door.

Now, after my father had seen to all that  
demanded his care,

He hurried away to the fields, to look on  
the treasure once more;  
Then first his affliction began, he burrowed  
and sought and explored,  
Yet the longer he scraped the less he could  
find. Of no earthly use  
Was the trouble he took on himself and  
his inconsolable grief,  
For the treasure was now far away, 'twas  
nowhere at all to be found. 140  
And then, out of anger and shame—how  
horribly plagues me the thought,  
By day as well as by night—my father  
himself went and hanged.

All this was accomplished by me, the  
infamous deed to prevent;  
And now me but evil it brings, yet I do  
not repent what I did.  
But the covetous Bruin and Isengrim have,  
by the side of the king,  
Their seats in his council assigned. And  
Reynard, poor fellow, how thou

Art thanked in the opposite way for having,  
the king to preserve,  
Thine own loving father destroyed! Where  
else is there one to be found,  
Who ruin would bring on himself, just  
merely your life to prolong?

Meanwhile had the king and the queen  
their hands on the treasure to get 150  
The greatest cupidity felt; aside they withdrew  
and the fox

Invited to them, in private to talk, and  
hastily said:

Speak! Where have you this wealth? That  
is the thing we would know.

Reynard then said in reply: To me of what  
use would it be,

To show the magnificent goods to the king,  
who me has condemned?

Too much he confides in my foes, the  
vicious assassins and thieves,

Who cumber him down with their lies, in  
order my life to obtain.

No, no! interjected the queen, thus shall it  
not come to pass!

My lord will accord you your life, and all  
that is past will forgive;

He will harbor his anger no more. In  
future, however, you must 160

More prudence display, and loyal and true  
remain to the king.

Reynard said: My lady and queen, if you  
with the king can prevail,

His troth in your presence to give that he  
will me pardon once more,

That he all my crimes and misdeeds, and  
all the resentment that I

In him have unhappily roused, will forever  
efface from his mind,

You then may rest fully assured no king of  
our time shall possess

Such vastness of wealth as shall he, through  
my fidelity, gain.

The treasure is great; when I show you  
the place, surprised you will be.

Confide in him not, said the king, it is  
only when he of his thefts,  
His lies, and his robberies tells, that one  
can him thoroughly trust; 170  
For a greater liar than he has certainly  
never drawn breath.

To this said the queen in reply: It is true  
that his life hitherto  
Hath little of confidence earned; at present,  
however, reflect  
That his uncle, the badger himself, and his  
own loving father as well,  
This time he has called to account, and  
made their iniquities known,  
If so he desired he could let them alone,  
and of different beasts  
These stories of his could relate: he would  
not so stupidly lie.

Is that your idea? responded the king; if  
you think it may turn

In reality out for the best, so that evil  
still greater may not  
Therefrom be derived, I will do as you  
say, and these criminal acts 180  
Of Reynard will take on myself, with all  
his nefarious deeds.  
I will trust him this once, but never again,  
let him bear that in mind!  
To him on my crown I will swear an  
inflexible oath, that, if he,  
In future, shall lie or transgress, he shall  
it forever repent,  
And that all who to him are of kin, be it  
only the tenth degree,  
Shall atone it whoever they are, and none  
from my wrath shall escape;  
With evil and shame shall they meet and  
ruthless pursuit of the law.

When finally Reynard beheld how quickly  
the mind of the king  
Was changing, he mustered up courage and  
said: Would I like a fool

Myself, gracious monarch, conduct and  
stories presume to relate, 190  
Whose truthfulness cannot be shown in very  
few days, at the most ?

The king then believed what he said and  
pardon he granted for all;  
His father's high treason the first, and then  
Reynard's own evil deeds;  
And the latter was now overwhelmingly  
pleased. At an opportune time  
Was he from the might of his foes and  
his own wretched destiny freed.  
Most noble of monarchs and lords, Reynard  
began then to say,  
May God, in his mercy, reward both you  
and your consort for all  
That you unto me the unworthy, have  
done; I will keep it in mind  
And, long as eternity lasts, will my grati-  
tude constantly show.  
In all the dominions and states of the earth  
there assuredly lives 200

Not a person now under the sun, to whom  
this magnificent wealth  
I would rather transfer than just to you  
two. What is there of grace  
That I, at your hands, have not had? For  
that will I willingly give  
King Emmerich's treasure to you, exactly  
as he it possessed.  
I now will explain where it is, and truth  
I will honestly speak.

Attend! To the eastward of Flanders a  
desert exists, and in that  
Lies a thicket alone, which is Hüsterlo  
called, take note of the name!  
Beyond is a spring that is Krekelborn  
named; now bear you in mind  
That not far apart are the two. Within  
this vicinity comes  
Not a woman or man, from beginning to  
end of the year. Here abides 210  
Nought but the bat and the owl, and here  
I the treasure concealed.



As Krekelborn known is the place, this  
note and make use of the sign.

With only your consort proceed to the  
place, for there certainly is

Not a soul that's sufficiently safe to send as  
a messenger there,

And very great harm would result; I could  
not it dare to advise.

Alone you must go to the spot. When  
Krekelborn you shall have passed,

You two little birches will see; and one,  
now attend, will be found

Not very far off from the brook; thus, gra-  
cious king, you will go

Unhindered and straight to the trees;  
beneath them the treasures lie hid.

You need only burrow and scrape; first  
moss you will find at the roots, 220

And then you'll discover at once the richest  
and costliest gems,

In gold most artistic and fine, and also  
king Emmerich's crown.

If Bruin had had his desire, then he would  
be wearing it now.

Decorations in number you'll find and jewels  
of brilliance and worth,  
And trinkets of gold, which now are not  
made, for who could them buy?  
This wealth when you see, gracious king,  
as there all together it lies,  
Of one thing indeed I am sure, in thought  
you will honor me then.  
Reynard, you honest old fox, you will  
think, who so prudently hid  
These treasures up under the moss, pros-  
perity always be thine,  
In what place soever thou art! Thus did  
the hypocrite speak. 230

To this said the king in reply: You must  
me attend when I go,  
For how, if alone, shall I light on the  
spot? Of Aix-la-Chapelle,  
Without any doubt, I have heard, and Lon-  
don and Paris as well,  
And Cologne; but Hüsterlo's name I never  
once heard in my life,

And of Krekelborn too may the same be  
observed; must then I not fear  
That lies you are telling again and coining  
these names in your head?

Unhappy was Reynard to hear the circum-  
spect words of the king,

And he said: Where I you direct is not  
so far off as if you

Were told at the Jordan to seek. Why  
look at me still with distrust?

To what I have said I adhere, that all can  
in Flanders be found. 240

Let us ask some of these; another, per-  
haps, may endorse what I say.

Krekelborn! Hüsterlo! Thus did I say,  
and these are their names.

And then he called out to the hare, but  
Lampen in terror held back.

Then Reynard exclaimed: Come, don't be  
afraid! The king only asks

That you, by the oath of allegiance you  
recently took, will tell

Him nought but the truth; so out with it  
now, provided you know,  
And say, where does Hüsterlo stand and  
Krekelborn too? Let us hear.

Lampen said: That can I easily tell. In  
the desert they stand,  
The one from the other not far. The  
inhabitants Hüsterlo call  
That thicket where bandy-legg'd Simonet  
long continued to dwell, 250  
Counterfeit money to make, with his daring  
companions in crime.  
Greatly at that very spot I suffered from  
hunger and cold,  
When I from the bull-dog Rhyn in direst  
distress had to fly.  
At this Reynard said to the hare: To the  
others again you may go,  
Among them resuming your place; enough  
to the king you have told.  
The king then to Reynard remarked: Be  
not discontented with me,

Because I impatient have been and harbored  
a doubt of your word;  
But see to it now, without fail, that me  
you conduct to the place.

Reynard spake: How happy myself I should  
prize, were it fitting to-day  
For me to go forth with the king, and  
him into Flanders attend; 260  
But for you it would count as a sin. In  
spite of the shame that I feel,  
Yet out it must come, though gladly I'd  
keep it still longer concealed.  
Our Isengrim, some time ago, himself got  
ordained as a monk,  
Not at all that the Lord he might serve,  
his belly's the god he obeys;  
The convent he almost consumed: at eating  
he's reckoned as six,  
So all was for him not enough; he whined  
about hunger and grief.  
It moved me to pity at last, when I saw  
him so thin and unwell,

And I faithfully give him my help, for  
he's a near kinsman of mine.  
But I, for the aid that I gave, the ban of  
the Pope have incurred,  
And now, without any delay, I would, with  
your knowledge and leave, 270  
Commune all alone with my soul and  
tomorrow, at rise of the sun,  
For grace and indulgence to sue, would  
start as a pilgrim to Rome,  
And thence I would over the sea; and thus  
bring about that can my sins  
Be from me all taken away; and should I  
come back to my home,  
I with honor may go at your side; if I did  
so, however, to-day,  
The world would be sure to remark: How  
is it our monarch again  
With Reynard is seen, whom not long ago  
to death he condemned,  
And who, in addition to that, is under the  
ban of the Pope!  
My lord, you will certainly see, 'twere bet-  
ter to leave it undone.

Responded the king: Very true, to me that  
of course was unknown. 280

If you are proscribed by the church, to  
take you would be a disgrace.

Either Lampen or somebody else can accom-  
pany me to the spring.

But, Reynard, that you from the ban are  
trying to get your release,

I look on as useful and good, and gra-  
ciously give you my leave

Tomorrow betimes to set out; I will not  
your pilgrimage stay.

For seems it to me that you wish from  
evil to good to return.

May God your intention approve and let  
you the journey complete! 287

## CANTO SIX

In this way was Reynard again to favor  
received by the king.  
And now stepped his majesty out to some  
rising ground that was near,  
And, speaking up there on a stone, he bade  
the assemblage of beasts  
Keep silence and down in the grass, accord-  
ing to birth and degree,  
To settle themselves; and Reynard stood up  
by the side of the queen.

The king, overlooking the crowd, began  
with much caution to speak:  
Be silent and harken to me, ye birds and  
ye beasts who are here,  
Alike both the rich and the poor; yea,  
hearken, ye great and ye small.  
My lords and acquaintances all, of household  
as well as of court,  
Reynard is here in my power; you were  
thinking, a short time ago, 10



He ought to be hanged, but now such a  
number of secrets at court  
He's revealed, that him I believe, and  
advisably mercy to him  
Again I vouchsafe. In addition to this has  
my consort, the queen,  
With earnestness pleaded for him, and I in  
his favor am moved,  
Forgiveness have fully bestowed, and on him  
his goods and his life  
Have freely conferred; henceforward my  
peace him shields and protects.  
Now all who together are here, are ordered,  
so long as you live,  
That Reynard, his children and wife, you  
honor shall everywhere show,  
Wherever, by day or by night, you chance  
them in future to meet;  
Moreover, of Reynard's affairs no further  
complaint will I hear. 20  
If he any evil has done, that belongs to  
the past; and his ways  
He will mend, as indeed he's begun, for  
early tomorrow he takes

His staff and his knapsack to go as a  
reverent pilgrim to Rome,  
And thence will he over the sea; and never  
again will come back  
Until he remission complete of all his mis-  
deeds has obtained.

Now Tybert, with rage, upon this to Bruin  
and Isengrim turned;  
Our trouble and pains are now lost, he ex-  
claimed. I would that were I  
Far from here! If Reynard has been once  
again into favor received,  
All arts that he knows he will use to bring  
us all three to an end.  
Already one eye have I lost, and now for  
the other I fear!

30

Good counsel is dear, responded the bear,  
that is plain to be seen.  
Then Isengrim said in return: The thing  
is so queer that it's best

To go straight away to the king. With  
Bruin he sullenly walked  
At once to the king and the queen; and  
Reynard severely denounced,  
With pungency speaking and loud. The  
king interrupted them thus:  
You surely could hear what I said? I've  
him newly to favor received.  
The king uttered this in a rage, and had  
in a twinkling the two  
Captured, imprisoned, and bound; for well  
he remembered the words  
That he from Reynard had heard concerning  
their traitorous acts.

Thus in the space of an hour had matters  
with Reynard become 40  
Most thoroughly changed. Himself he'd  
got free, and into disgrace  
His accusers had come; he even knew how,  
in his spite, to procure  
That off from the back of the bear a piece  
of his hide should he cut,

A foot in its length and its width, that a  
wallet for him on the road  
Provided might be; so seemed as a pilgrim  
but little to want;  
But still he entreated the queen to furnish  
him also with shoes,  
And said: Gracious lady, you own that I  
am your pilgrim just now,  
Then give me your help, I implore, that I  
may my journey complete.  
Now four useful shoes has the wolf, it  
surely were nothing but just  
That he with a pair should dispense, for  
me on my journey to wear; 50  
These get, gracious lady, for me, by means  
of his lordship, the king.  
Dame Greedimund also could spare a couple  
of hers for my use,  
For she, as a housewife, is forced to live  
almost wholly in-doors.

This claim was regarded as just by the  
queen. They assuredly can

Each of them part with a pair, she graciously said in reply.

Reynard was thankful for this, and said with a rapturous bow:

If four solid shoes I acquire, I will surely no longer delay.

All the good that I presently may, as a pilgrim, be able to do,

You surely shall equally share, both you and our merciful king.

On a pilgrimage we are compelled to make  
supplication for all 60

Who us have in any way helped. May  
God then your goodness reward!

Thus did sir Isengrim have from his two front paws to resign,

Far up as his ankles, his shoes; and then a like fate must his wife,

Dame Greedimund, also endure, for she had her hind ones to lose.

In this manner both had to lose the skin and the claws of their feet,

And together with Bruin they lay, mourn-  
fully waiting for death;  
But the hypocrite, having obtained the wallet  
and shoes as desired,  
Went hither and flaunted his jeers; at  
Greedimund worse than the rest.  
My love, my own darling, he said, just  
give but a glance and observe  
How splendidly fit me your shoes, I hope  
that they also will wear. 70  
Great effort already you've made, my ruin,  
perchance, to achieve,  
But I too have exerted myself, and my  
labor has met with success.  
If you your enjoyment have had, so my  
turn at length it is now;  
But this is the uniform rule, and one must  
learn how to submit.  
As now I proceed on my road, my cherished  
relations I can  
Remember with thanks. You me have a  
present of shoes kindly made,  
A deed you shall never regret; whatever  
indulgence I gain

You surely shall share when I fetch it from  
Rome and over the sea.

Dame Greedimund lay in such pain, that  
scarcely the strength she retained  
To utter a word, yet roused herself up and  
said with a groan: 80

In order to punish our sins, God allows all  
with you to succeed.

Still Isengrim said not a word, but to-  
gether with Bruin lay still;

They both were unhappy enough, in bondage  
and covered with wounds,

And now set at nought by their foe. Tybert,  
the cat, was not there,

And Reynard was anxious enough to put  
him in hot water as well.

The hypocrite busied himself, at morn of  
the following day,

In rubbing with tallow and oil the shoes  
that his kinsmen had lost;

And now, making haste to present himself  
to the king, he observed;  
Your dutiful servant's prepared on his sacred  
mission to start;  
Pray now of your mercy command the priest  
of your majesty's court, 90  
A blessing on me to bestow, that I full of  
hope may depart;  
And thus approbation divine on my going  
and coming secure.  
The ram by the monarch had been his  
imperial chaplain ordained,  
He also had charge of religious affairs, he  
too by the king  
Was used as a scribe, and Bellyn was named.  
Then had he him called  
And said: I desire that at once a few holy  
words shall be read  
Over Reynard awaiting you here, him now  
on the journey to bless,  
That he has in view; he is going to Rome  
and the water will cross;  
The wallet upon him suspend, and give  
him the staff in his hand.



And thereupon Bellyn replied: You have,  
my lord king, I presume, 100  
Discovered that Reynard, as yet, has not  
been released from the ban;  
Should only I do as you wish, I should  
wrath from my bishop incur,  
Who about it would easily learn, and me to  
chastise has the power.  
To Reynard indeed will I do not a thing,  
either evil or good;  
If settled the matter could be, and certainly  
would not thereto  
The Bishop, lord Lackland, object; or pos-  
sibly angry thereat,  
The provost, sir Wanton, become, or indeed  
Rapiamus the dean,  
My blessing I gladly would give, as now I  
am ordered by you.

And thus responded the king: What mean  
these evasions and shifts?  
Many words you compel us to hear, but  
back is there little enough. 110

If you over Reynard will read not a thing,  
either evil or good,  
The devil I'll ask it to do. What's church  
or the bishop to me?  
Reynard would journey to Rome! Of that  
would you stand in the way?  
With anxiety Bellyn began to scratch at the  
back of his ears;  
He feared the ill-will of his king, and over  
the pilgrim at once  
To read from the book he began, but Reynard  
did little attend.  
Yet all it could give was received: of that  
not a doubt can exist.

And now was the benison read, delivered  
the wallet and staff,  
And thus for his counterfeit trip the pilgrim  
was fully equipped.  
Sham tears were now running down the  
cheeks of the rascally scamp 120  
And wetting his beard, as if he were feeling  
the deepest regret.

And truly it did give him pain, that all of  
his foes he had not

Together brought evil upon, but only these  
three had disgraced.

Yet there stood he up and implored that  
earnestly all of them would,

As well as they could, for him pray. And  
now preparation he made

To hurry away, for he felt himself guilty  
and hence was in fear.

Reynard, demanded the king, why are you  
making such haste ?

Who begins what is good should never  
delay, said Reynard to this;

A furlough I beg of you now, for the  
right and appropriate time

Has come, if your majesty please, so let  
me the journey begin. 130

The furlough is yours, responded the king;  
he also enjoined

In a body the lords of the court with the  
spurious pilgrim to go,

And wait on a stretch of the way. In the  
meantime in prison remained

Poor Bruin and Isengrim both, lamenting  
their pain and disgrace.

In this way had Reynard again of the love  
and esteem of the king  
Come into possession complete; he went in  
great honor from court,  
And seemed, with his wallet and staff, to  
be off to the tomb of our Lord;  
Having there just as little to do as a may-  
pole in Aix-la-chapelle.  
But otherwise far was his aim. He had  
made a successful attempt,  
With a flaxen beard and a waxen nose, what-  
ever by that may be meant, 140  
His monarch completely to hoax; and all  
his accusers were forced  
To follow him now as he went, and him  
with respect to attend.  
But he could not relinquish his tricks, and  
said, upon taking his leave:  
My lord, be you well on your guard, that  
now the two renegades there

Do not have a chance to escape, but keep  
them in prison well bound;  
Desist they would not, if at large, from  
shameful and treacherous deeds.  
Pray do not forget, noble king, that your  
life would in jeopardy be.

So went he along on his road, with coun-  
tenance calm and devout,  
With guise unaffected and grave, as if any  
other were strange.  
At this did the monarch again himself to  
his palace betake, 150  
And followed him all of the beasts. Obey-  
ing the order he gave,  
They Reynard attended no more than a  
very short distance away.  
And carry himself did the scamp in a  
manner so joyless and sad,  
That many a good-natured man to pity had  
found himself moved;  
And Lampen the hare was especially grieved.  
Are we now compelled,

Dear Lampen, the villain remarked, to bid  
to each other adieu?

I would that your pleasure it were, you and  
dear Bellyn the ram,

To travel with me on my road a little bit  
further to-day!

By doing so you would confer the greatest  
of favors on me,

For pleasant companions you are, and good  
honest people withal; 160

Of you only good is e'er said, and honor  
to me would it bring.

You are saintly and moral of life, and live  
just precisely the same

As I, when a hermit, did live; content are  
you ever with herbs,

Are wonted with grasses and leaves your  
hunger to still, and you ask

Not either for bread or for meat, or other  
things special to eat.

Thus was he able with praise the two little  
weaklings to fool;

And both went together with him, till up  
to his dwelling they came

And saw Malepartus the fort, and Reynard  
remarked to the ram:

You, Bellyn, outside here remain; the herbs  
and the grasses you can

Here relish as much as you please; these  
mountainous regions produce 170

Vegetation abundant and rare, wholesome  
and good to the taste.

Within I'll take Lampen with me; now  
beg him, I pray, to console

My wife, who in sadness is plunged, and  
who, upon coming to find

That I, as a pilgrim, am going to Rome,  
will be in despair.

Sweet words brought the fox into use, in  
order the two to deceive.

Lampen then led he within, and found his  
disconsolate wife

There lying with both of her cubs, with  
grief in excess overcome.

For hope she had quite given up that Rey-  
nard would ever again

Return from the court, and now she him  
saw with wallet and staff,

Which almost miraculous seemed. She said  
to him: Reinhart, my dear, 180  
Pray tell me, how fared it with you, and  
what have you had to go through?  
And he said: I guilty was found, and  
even imprisoned and bound,  
But merciful turned out the king, and again,  
after all, set me free;  
And I, as a pilgrim, came off, leaving  
behind as my bail  
Bruin and Isengrim both. Thereafter the  
king, of his grace,  
For atonement, gave Lampen to me; to do  
with him just as we will.  
For thus said the king at the last, in the  
justice of his decree:  
Lampen it was who made the complaint;  
thus truly has he  
Infinite punishment earned, and now shall  
he answer for all.  
Lampen was struck with dismay at the  
menacing words of the fox, 190  
And, puzzled, himself tried to save by hur-  
rying out of the house.



Reynard blocked up his way to the door,  
and quickly the murderer seized  
The poor wretched thing by the throat, who,  
loud and with horror, for help  
Cried: help me, O Bellyn, or I am undone!  
The pilgrim, indeed,  
Is murdering me! His cry was, however,  
not long; for his throat  
Had Reynard apace bitten through. And  
thus he entreated his guest.  
Come now, he exclaimed, and let us eat  
fast, for fat is the hare,  
And good to the taste. At present, indeed,  
for the very first time,  
Is he of some use, silly fool! I promised  
him this long ago.  
But now it is past, and now may the traitor  
his charges produce. 200  
Then Reynard at once set to work with his  
children and wife, and they tore,  
Full quickly, the skin from the hare, and an  
excellent dinner enjoyed.  
To the vixen delicious it was, and again  
and again she exclaimed:

Thanks to the king and the queen, by  
whose condescension we have  
Obtained this magnificent feast. May God  
them reward for the deed!  
Keep eating, said Reynard to her, enough  
for the present is that;  
Today let us all have our fill; much more  
I'm expecting to get,  
For all, at the last, shall be forced to fully  
adjust their accounts,  
Who Reynard presume to accost, with inten-  
tion of doing him harm.

Dame Ermelyn said upon this: How was it  
you came, I would ask, 210  
To get yourself out of their hands? Thereto  
he replied: Many hours  
I should need, were I to relate with how  
much adroitness the king  
I twisted about as I would, and him and  
his consort befooled.  
I will not between us deny that slender  
indeed is the love

That exists between me and the king, and  
not very long to endure.  
When he the whole truth ascertains, he  
fiercely indignant will be;  
If he get me again in his power, nor silver  
nor gold will avail  
Me to save; he certainly will me pursue  
and try to arrest.  
I then can no mercy expect, that know I  
as well as can be;  
Unhanged will he not let me go, so let us  
get out of his way. 220

Let us flee to the Swabian hills, there is  
nobody knowing us there;  
We'll walk in the ways of the land, and  
find, if but God give us help,  
A plenty of savory food and abundance of  
all that is good.  
Chickens and geese, and rabbits and hares,  
and sugar and dates,  
And figs and raisins and birds of every  
species and size;

And there all the bread that is used is  
seasoned with butter and eggs.

The water is limpid and pure, the air is  
delightful and clear;

Of fish can a plenty be caught, entitled  
Galline, while some,

Pullus and Gallus and Anas are called;  
who can them all name?

These fish I enjoy very much; and even  
to catch them one need 230

Very deep in the water not plunge; I  
always them greatly enjoy.

When there I would pass for a monk.  
Yes, dear little wife, if we wish

At last to be free, we must hence, for  
you must accompany me.

Now understand well what I say! The  
king has permitted me now

To go free because of my lies concerning  
mysterious things.

King Emmerich's glorious hoard I promised  
for him to procure,

And said that it over at Krekelborn lay;  
if thither they go  
To seek it, alas, they will find both one  
and the other not there!  
In vain will they dig in the earth; and  
lo! when our monarch shall find  
Himself in this manner beguiled, then fright-  
ful his fury will be. 240  
For what I invented as lies, before I away  
from him got,  
You can think. For me of a truth next  
door to a hanging it came;  
I was never in bitterer plight, nor ever in  
greater dismay;  
Indeed, I should never desire again in such  
danger to be.  
In short, let happen what may, myself I  
will never permit  
To go any more to the court, and thus to  
the power of the king  
My life to surrender again; it needed the  
greatest of skill,  
My thumb, by the sweat of my face, from  
out of his mouth to extract.

Then, troubled, dame Ermelyn said: What  
profit thereby shall we gain?

Wretched and strange shall we be in  
every country but this. 250

Here all we can wish we possess. You  
master remain of your serfs.

And do you so terribly need new risks and  
adventures to seek?

Remember this truth: In order to follow  
the bird in the bush,

The bird in the hand to release is neither  
sagacious nor wise.

We here can live safely enough! Why,  
look at our citadel's strength!

If the king with his army beleaguer us  
here, or even resolve

The road with his forces to hold, we still  
such a number possess

Of loopholes and passages hid, that we can  
in safety effect

Our escape; but you know it better than I,  
so why do I speak?

For him by main force to attempt to get  
us again in his hands, 260

Work without measure will take, and troubles  
me not in the least.

But for you to have taken a vow to leave  
me for over the sea,

That worries me much. It stuns me almost.

What good could it do?

Dear woman, afflict yourself not, said Rey-  
nard to her in reply.

Just listen to me and note what I say:  
far better forsworn

Than of life to be shorn! Thus said to  
me once at confession a sage:

An oath of compulsion is nought. Not a  
snap of the finger care I

For any such trifle as that! I speak of  
the oath, understand.

It then shall be done as you say, and I  
will continue at home.

But little I have, of a truth, to look for  
in Rome, and if I

270

Myself by ten pledges had bound, I should  
never Jerusalem see;

I mean to remain with you here, as is  
certainly most to my mind;  
Other places I do not regard as better than  
that which I have.  
If mischief the king will me do, then  
calmly I must it await;  
He is strong and too mighty for me, yet  
possibly I may succeed  
In duping him yet once again, and slipping  
the harlequin's cap  
Over his ears with its bells. He shall, if  
I live long enough,  
Find matters far worse than he wants; of  
that I will give him my oath.

Impatiently Bellyn began to grumble outside of the door:

Do you, Lampen, not mean to depart?  
Come now and let us be gone! 280  
His call Reynard heard and hurried outside,  
and there to him said:  
My dear, Lampen earnestly begs that you  
will accept his regrets,



He is happy within with his aunt, and  
thinks you will not grudge him that.  
Go on very slowly ahead, for his aunt,  
mistress Ermlyn, will not,  
This instant, permit him to leave; their  
pleasure you would not disturb.

Then Bellyn responded in turn: An out-  
cry I heard, what was that?  
Lampen I heard; and he called to me:  
Help! O, Bellyn, come help!  
Have you any harm to him done? Then  
Reynard judiciously said:  
Do not misconceive what I say; I spoke of  
the journey I've vowed,  
And then was my wife overcome, it seemed  
she was ready to faint; 290  
There befell her a deathly affright, as if in  
a swoon she appeared.  
Now Lampen this saw with alarm, and, in  
his distraction, he cried:  
Come help me, O Bellyn, I beg! Oh,  
tarry not long from my aid!

My aunt will never, I'm sure, again to me  
living come back.

So far as I know, Bellyn said, it was  
terror that made him call out.

Not a hair of his body is hurt, protested  
the villain with oaths;

I would very much rather that harm to  
me, than to Lampen, occur.

Reynard then said: Did you hear? But  
yesterday bade me the king,

As soon as I got to my home, him back  
in some letters to send

My notions of what should be done in cer-  
tain important affairs? 300

Dear nephew, these take with you now, I  
have them all ready to send.

Therein pretty things do I say, and give  
him most prudent advice.

Lampen is fully content, I heard him with  
joy, as I left,

Recalling to mind with his aunt events of  
the days long ago.

How they prattled! As if they never could  
tire; they ate and they drank,

And greatly each other enjoyed; meanwhile  
my advices I wrote.

Dear Reinhart, said Bellyn to this, you  
must the despatches be sure

To safely protect; no pocket have I in  
which them to put,

And should I break open the seal, with me  
very hard would it go.

Reynard said: That I know well enough  
how to do; the wallet, I think, 310

That Bruin gave me from his hide, is fit-  
ting exactly for that;

It is thick and also it's tough; in that I'll  
the letters secure.

The king, in return, will bestow a special  
reward upon you;

With honor receive you he will; thrice  
welcome to him will you be.

All this believed Bellyn the ram. Then  
hastened the other again

Back into the house; the wallet he took  
and sprily stuck in

The head of the massacred hare, and also  
bethought him of how  
He Bellyn could manage to keep from getting  
inside of the pouch.

He said, as he came out again: Your neck  
hang the wallet around,  
And nothing, my nephew, permit to move  
you to make an attempt 320  
Within the despatches to look; such prying  
would be a disgrace.  
With care have I fastened them up, and  
thus you must let them remain.  
Not even unfasten the bag; I heedful have  
been that the knot  
Shall be skillfully tied, for such is my way  
in important affairs  
That pass between me and the king; and,  
should the king find that the thongs  
Are entwined in the usual way, it then  
will be granted that you  
His grace and his presents deserve, as a  
messenger whom he can trust.

When once you put eyes on the king, if  
you in still higher esteem  
By him would in future be held, then let  
him imagine that you,  
Have me with discretion advised what I in  
the letters should put, 330  
And even in writing them helped; this  
profit and honor will bring.  
And Bellyn was mightily pleased, and  
bounded above from the place  
High up in the air with delight; ran hither  
and thither, and said:  
Reynard, my nephew and lord, I now that  
you love me perceive,  
And honor on me would bestow. Before  
all the lords of the court  
It will add very much to my fame, that I  
such transcendent ideas,  
In language so choice and refined, have  
composed; for I, in good truth,  
Know not, as do you, how to write, but  
they shall imagine I do;  
And you have I only to thank. It truly  
turned out for my good

That hither I travelled with you. Pray, tell  
me what further you wish! 340  
Is Lampen not going with me, now that  
I'm starting from here?

No, coolly the villain replied, just now that  
impossible is;  
You slowly go on in advance, and he shall  
come after, as soon  
As I some momentous affairs to him have  
entrusted and charged.  
God with you remain, Bellyn said, I now  
will walk on as you say.  
And he hastened away from the place,  
arriving at noon at the court.

As on him the king cast his eyes, and also  
the wallet espied,  
He exclaimed: You Bellyn, pray whence  
do you come? And where is the fox?  
You carry his wallet, I see, pray what is  
the meaning of that?

Then Bellyn as follows replied: He begged  
me, most gracious of kings, 350  
Two letters to you to convey, which we  
had together composed.  
In these you will find some matters of  
weight with acumen discussed;  
And as to the contents indeed, therein my  
advice has been sought;  
Here in the knapsack they are; the knots  
quite securely he tied.

The monarch commanded forthwith, that  
summoned the beaver should be,  
Who notary was and scribe to the king,  
and Bockert was called;  
His business it was to receive all letters of  
weight and finesse,  
And decipher aloud to the king, as he  
many languages knew.  
And the king sent for Tybert as well, who  
also was present to be.  
When Bockert the knots had untied, with  
Tybert his comrade to help, 360

He drew from the wallet the head of  
Lampen, the poor murdered hare,  
And cried with astonishment great: And  
this is a letter, indeed!  
It truly is queer! Who has it compiled?  
Who can it explain?  
Lampen's head this undoubtedly is; mistake  
about that there is none.

With horror were stricken the king and  
the queen; and then did the king  
Bend forward his head and exclaim: Oh  
fox, that I had you again!  
The king and the queen were distressed,  
beyond any words to express.  
Reynard on me has imposed! The monarch  
cried out. Oh, that I  
To his wicked and scandalous lies had not  
given heed as I did!  
Confounded appeared he to be, and also the  
beasts were perplexed. 370

Lupardus, however, began, who was closely  
allied to the king:



I cannot conceive, in good sooth, why you in  
such trouble should be,  
Nor either your consort the queen. Such  
notions away from you drive!  
Take courage, or you may indeed be covered  
with shame before all.  
Are you not our ruler and lord? Then all  
who are here must obey.

On that score alone, said the king, you  
need not at all be amazed  
That I am thus grieved to the heart. In  
duty, alas, I have failed!  
For me has the traitor induced, with  
shameful and scandalous tricks,  
To punish my comrades and friends. At  
present there lie in disgrace  
Bruin and Isengrim both; repent should I  
not from my heart? 380  
No glory to me does it bring, that I to  
the best of the lords  
Of my court have so wickedly done, and  
then in the liar himself

So fully my trust have reposed, and so  
indiscreetly behaved.

I followed too quickly my wife, who suffered  
herself to be duped,

And begged and entreated for him. Oh,  
had I but firmer remained!

But now is repentance too late, and all  
admonition in vain.

And thus did Lupardus reply: Lord king,  
lend an ear to my prayer,

And suffer no longer regret. The evil  
that's done can be squared.

For atonement deliver the ram at once to  
the wolves and the bear;

Bellyn has frankly confessed, intrepidly too,  
that he gave 390

His counsel that Lampen should die. Now  
let him pay for it back!

And we, after that has been done, together  
for Reynard will make,

And catch him if well it turn out; then  
can he quickly be hanged.

If permitted to speak, he'll talk himself  
free, and never will hang.  
I know that the wolf and the bear can  
surely be reconciled thus.

This heard with much pleasure the king,  
and unto Lupardus he said:  
Your counsel is grateful to me; so now  
with despatch go and fetch  
Both of the barons to me, and they shall  
with honor again  
With me in my council have seats. And  
see that the animals all  
In a body together be called, who here at  
the court may have been. 400  
They all shall be duly informed how Rey-  
nard hath shamefully lied,  
How out of my hands he escaped, and  
Lampen with Bellyn's aid slew;  
And all shall the wolf and the bear with  
due veneration receive.  
So I, for amends, give up to my lords, as  
you have advised,

Bellyn, the traitor, and all his relations for  
time without end.

Lupardus no rest himself gave till he had  
the prisoners both,  
Bruin and Isengrim, found; they then were  
set free, and he said:

Consolation accept at my hands! I bring  
you our prince's good-will,  
And also free convoy from here. I wish  
to inform you, my lords,  
That his majesty suffers regret if harm  
upon you he has brought. 410  
He bids me assure you of this, and wishes  
to satisfy both.

To expiate what has been done, you Bellyn,  
with all of his race,

Yea, every one of his kin, for ever shall  
have as your own.

Attack them with more ado, be it either  
in forest or field

That on them you happen to come; they  
are all of them given to you.

And still, in addition to this, our monarch  
has deigned to permit  
That Reynard, who you has deceived, you  
may in all manners despoil;  
And him, with his offspring and wife, and  
all of his kindred as well,  
Wherever they be, may pursue, and none  
shall with you interfere.  
This freedom so dear I proclaim in the  
name of our master the king; 420  
He, and all who may after him rule, these  
rights will respect and uphold.  
You now have to only forget the worries  
you've had to endure,  
And swear to him service and truth, and  
this you with honor can do.  
He never will harm you again; I advise  
you the offer to grasp.

Thus was atonement decreed; and by it  
the ram was compelled  
To pay the account with his life; and all  
of his kindred and kind

Have, down to this day, been pursued by  
Isengrim's vigorous stock.  
Thus the hate everlasting began. Even  
now continue the wolves,  
Without any shyness or shame, the lambs  
and the sheep to revile,  
And have not the shade of a doubt that  
justice is wholly with them; 430  
Nothing assuages their wrath, and placated  
they never can be.  
But for Bruin and Isengrim's sake, in order  
them honor to pay,  
The king had proceedings at court prolonged  
for twelve days, as he wished  
To openly show how eager he was these  
lords to appease. 434

## CANTO SEVEN

And now was the court to be seen in  
splendor adorned and prepared;  
Many knights were arriving thereat, and the  
beasts, who together had come,  
Were followed by numberless birds; high  
honor did all in one breath  
To Bruin and Isengrim give, who began  
their mishaps to forget.  
There festively sported itself the grandest  
assembly by far,  
That ever together was brought; trumpets  
and kettle-drums clanged,  
The stately dance of the court was started  
with dignified grace,  
And abundance was furnished for all of  
whatever by each could be wished.  
Herald on herald was sent through the land  
to summon the guests,  
The birds and the beasts made ready them-  
selves and in couples arrived. 10

They traveled by day and by night, the  
whole of them eager to come.

But Reynard, the fox, was not there; he  
was lying in wait at his home,  
And meant not to go to the court, that  
pilgrim abandoned and false;  
Little favor expected he there. According  
to habit of old,  
To practice his villainous tricks was the  
pleasantest thing to the scamp.  
And now at the court could be heard the  
most beautiful songs of the day;  
Sweet food and fine wines to the guests  
with unsparing hand were supplied,  
And tilting and fencing were shown. Of  
those who had come to the feast,  
Attached himself each to his own, and in  
singing and dancing engaged;  
While at intervals, now and again, the reed-  
pipe and flute might be heard. 20  
And the king, from his hall up above,  
looked affably down on the scene;



The unwieldy disorder him pleased, and to  
gaze on it gave him delight.

Eight days had thus flown to the past (the  
king had come down to the feast,  
And taken his seat at the board among  
the supreme of his lords,  
With his consort, the queen, at his side)  
when bloody the rabbit arrived,  
And, stepping in front of the king, said  
he, in most sorrowful tones:

Oh, master! oh, king! and all of you  
here! on me pity bestow!  
For cruel deception so base and murderous  
actions so vile,  
As now from the fox I endure, have seldom  
been brought to your ken.  
About six o'clock yesterday morn I came on  
him seated alone, 30  
As, taking a stroll on the road, before  
Malepartus I passed;

I expected to go on my way without molestation or fear;

But, clad in a pilgrim's attire, as though morning prayer he perused,

He was sitting in front of his gate. When eyes I put on him I tried

To pass nimbly by on my road, that I to your court might proceed.

But he spied me and instantly rose; to meet me, stepped right in my path,

And I thought that he wished me to greet; he seized me, however, instead,

With murd'rous intent in his grasp, and between my ears I could feel

His claws in my flesh, and I certainly thought that my head I should lose,

For long and sharp are his nails; he pressed me below to the earth. 40

I luckily got myself free and, as I'm so spry, I escaped;

He snarled as I left him behind, and swore he would find me again.

I bridled my tongue and made off; alas, he, however, retained



“When eyes I put on him, I tried to pass nimbly by on my road.”

An ear that he tore from my head; and I  
    come with a blood-covered scalp.  
See, from it four holes have I borne! You  
    will easily grasp in your minds  
The force of the blows that he struck;  
    'twas a chance that I ever got up.  
Now consider, I pray, my distress, and reflect  
    on your wardship as well;  
For who can a journey attempt, or who  
    can come here to your court,  
If the robber stands guard on the roads  
    and damages all who approach?

He scarcely had drawn to a close when  
    alighted the talkative rook,                   50  
Sir Corbant, who said: Most worshipful lord  
    and beneficent king,  
The tidings are sad that I have to impart;  
    I am not in a state  
To say much, on account of my woe and  
    alarm; and I fear very much  
That my heart it will break, so wretched a  
    thing has just happened to me.

My wife, mistress Keenbeak, and I were  
walking together today,  
Betimes in the morn, and Reynard found  
lying as dead on the heath;  
Both eyes were turned up in his head, and  
lifeless was hanging his tongue  
Far out of his wide open mouth. Then,  
from sheer fright, I began  
To lustily scream; he moved himself not;  
I cried and bemoaned;  
Exclaimed: Woe to me! and alas! And  
then I repeated the plaint: 60  
Alas, he is dead! How sorry for him and  
afflicted I am!  
My wife was in sadness as well, and voice  
gave we both to our grief.  
I fingered him belly and head; my wife in  
like manner drew near,  
And placed herself close to his chin, to  
find if his breathing at all  
Gave indication of life, but she waited and  
listened in vain;  
We both to this fact could have sworn.  
Now, please, the calamity hear!



As without apprehension and sad, to the  
mouth of the treacherous scamp  
She nearer put forward her beak, the monster  
took note of the act,  
And at her with suddenness snapped and  
savagely bit off her head.  
How stricken with terror I was, I will not  
attempt to describe. 70  
Woe, woe! I shouted and screamed; then  
darted he forth and, at once,  
Snapped also at me, when backwards I  
started and hastened to fly;  
If I not so nimble had been, he would like-  
wise have me firmly caught.  
The murderer's clutches, indeed, I hardly  
escaped as it was;  
In haste I flew into a tree. Oh, had I my  
sorrowful life  
Not preserved! My wife I could see held  
fast in the miscreant's claws.  
Alas! the dear creature he quickly devoured,  
and to me he appeared  
Voracious and famished, as if yet another  
he gladly would eat;

He left not a bone unconsumed, not even  
a knuckle remained.

Such was the blow I sustained. He hurried  
away from the place, 80

But I was not able to leave; I flew, with  
a sorrowful heart,

Again to the spot, where all I could find  
was some feathers and blood

Of my wife's, and these I bring hither to  
you, as a proof of the crime.

Have pity, beneficent lord; for should you  
at present again

With this dastardly traitor forbear, and legit-  
imate vengeance defer;

Should you to your safe-guards and peace  
not force and due emphasis give,

About it much talk there might be, that  
would not be much to your mind;

For 'tis said, he is guilty himself of the  
deed, who to punish hath power

And punisheth not; each then, with high  
hand, tries to carry things on.

Your dignity it would affect; to give it  
some thought would be well. 90



Thus had the plaint of the crow and the  
good little rabbit been brought  
Before the assembled court. Then Leo, the  
king, was enraged,  
And he cried: I now, by my nuptial troth,  
before all of you swear  
That I will so punish this crime, that long  
it remembered shall be.  
My rule and safe-conduct to scoff! That  
will I never endure.  
Too lightly by far put I trust in the scamp  
and let him escape;  
As a pilgrim him even equipped, and saw  
make his exit from here,  
As if he were going to Rome. What  
indeed did the liar not make  
Us believe! How well he contrived a word  
in advance from the queen,  
With ease, to secure. On me she prevailed  
and now he is free. 100  
But not the last one shall I be, whose heart  
with repentance is wrung,  
Through taking a woman's advice. And if  
we shall longer allow

The villain unpunished to go, we soon  
shall be covered with shame;  
He never was aught but a knave, and such  
will he ever remain.  
Now consult you together, my lords, how  
to catch him and bring him to book;  
If about it we earnestly set, the matter  
will surely succeed.

Most highly these words of the king did  
Bruin and Isengrim please.  
At last we our vengeance shall see! Such  
was the thought of them both;  
Yet express not a word did they dare, for  
clearly they saw that the king  
Was greatly disturbed in his mind, and all  
boiling over with wrath. 110

And after a time said the queen: For  
you, my dear lord, it is bad  
So heavy to be in your wrath and so light  
in the use of bad words;

Your consequence suffers thereby, and the  
value of what you may say.  
The facts of the case have as yet by no  
means been brought to the light.  
Has yet the accused to be heard; and,  
should he before us be brought,  
Would silent be many a one, who now  
against Reynard declaims.  
Both parties should always be heard, for  
many a venturesome knave  
Brings charges to cover misdeeds of his  
own. As learned and wise  
I Reynard esteemed, without wicked  
thoughts, who always, indeed,  
Had only your good in his mind, though  
now this may not so appear. 120  
To follow his counsel is good, yea, even  
though true that his life  
Be such as to merit much blame. And  
then it is well to reflect  
On the ample extent of his family ties.  
The matter will not  
Be improved by precipitate haste, and  
whatever it be you decide

.

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You certainly can, in the end, as lord and  
commander, enforce.

Hereat sir Lupardus remarked: To many  
you've given your ear,  
Now also give ear unto me. He yet may  
appear and what you  
Decide upon then, at once shall be done;  
so probably think  
These lords who assembled are here, and as  
well your illustrious queen.

Broke Isengrim in upon this: What each  
may think best let him say, 130  
Give ear, sir Lupardus, to me. If at this  
very moment, indeed,  
Reynard were here and himself should  
acquit of this twofold complaint,  
Still easy for me would it be, to make it  
as clear as the day  
That the law has a claim on his life. But  
silence I'll keep about all,

Till we him have secured. Can you have  
    forgotten how much he the king  
Deceived with that treasure of his, which  
    he should in Hüsterlo, near  
Unto Krekelborn find, and the other great  
    falsehoods besides that he told?  
To all the deceiver he's played, and Bruin  
    and me has disgraced;  
My life I will risk upon this. Thus now  
    is the liar engaged  
On the heath; he is roving about, committing  
    foul murders and thefts: 140  
Seems it good to the king and his lords,  
    there matters, of course, as they are  
May go on. Yet, were he in earnest himself  
    to present at the court,  
We him had here seen long ago. The  
    scouts of the king were despatched  
All over the land, to summon the guests,  
    yet at home he remained.

To this said the king in reply: By waiting  
    so long for him here

What good do we get? Let each be prepared (thus do I command)  
To go with me off in six days; for I, let me tell you, will see  
An end to these charges and grievances brought. What say you, my lords?  
Would the rascal not manage, at last, a land to destruction to bring?  
Make ready as best you know how, and come in your armor arrayed; 150  
Come furnished with bow and with spear, and all other weapons you have,  
And show yourselves gallant and brave; and before me let each of you bear,  
For knights I may dub on the field, without loss of honor his name.  
Malepartus, the castle, we'll seize, and what he may have in the place  
We will then overhaul. Then shouted they all in accord: We'll obey.

Thus did the king and his knights determine sir Reynard's strong fort,

Malepartus, to storm, and the fox to chastise. But Grimbart, at this,

Who one of the council had been, went stealthily out and made haste

Reynard, his uncle, to find, in order to take him the news.

In sorrow his road he pursued, and thus he bemoaned to himself: 160

My uncle, what now may take place? Alas! with good reason for thee

Do all of thy kindred lament, thou head of the whole of our race.

When our causes were pleaded by you we felt ourselves perfectly safe,

For no one could stand before you and your varied supply of resource.

Thus going, the castle he reached and Reynard found sitting outside,

Who had managed, just prior to this, two tender young pigeons to catch,

That out of their nest had escaped, to make an endeavor to fly;

But short were their wings for the task,  
and down they had fallen to earth,  
Unable again to arise; in this way had Reynard them seized,

For he prowled about often to hunt. Just  
then in the distance he saw 170  
Coming Grimbart, and did him await. In  
giving him greeting he said:

My nephew, more welcome you are than  
anyone else of my blood.

But why are you running so hard? You  
gasp! Are you bringing me news?

And Grimbart replied to him thus: The  
tidings I have to announce,

When heard, will no solace convey; you see,  
I come running through fear.

Your life and estates are all lost. The  
wrath of the king I have seen;

He swears that you now he will catch and  
put to an infamous death.

He even has ordered us all, the sixth day  
from now, with our arms

To march to this place, with bow and with  
sword, with wagons and guns.



Against you is everything now, so think on  
the matter betimes; 180  
For Bruin and Isengrim both are again hand  
and glove with the king;  
More trusted by him of a truth than I was  
e'er trusted by you;  
And all comes to pass as they wish. A  
horrible cut-throat and thief  
You Isengrim openly called, and in this  
way excites he the king.  
He has our high sheriff been made, as you,  
in some weeks, will find out.  
The rabbit appeared, and also the crow,  
and they brought in the court  
The gravest complaints against you. If  
only the king have success  
In catching you now, your life is not long  
that can I but fear.

Nothing further? responded the fox. For  
all that you, so far, have said  
I care not a snap of my thumb. If the  
king and his council complete 190

Had doubly and trebly affirmed, and taken  
inviolate oaths,

Yet I, when I come in their midst, will  
raise myself up above all.

They advise and still they advise, yet never  
can speak to the point.

Dear nephew, all this never mind, but  
come with me now and find out

What you I am able to give. These  
pigeons just now I have caught,

Young and fat; they still of all dishes I  
know are the most to my taste;

For easy they are to digest, one has but  
to swallow them down;

And sweet do the little bones taste, they  
verily melt in the mouth,

Composed of half milk and half blood.  
Spoon-meat agrees with me well,

And it's also the same with my wife; so  
come and she will, I am sure, 200

To greet us be pleased; yet let her not know  
for what purpose you've come.

A trifle sinks into her heart and worries  
her almost to death.

Tomorrow with you I will go to the court,  
and I hope that you there  
Will give me, dear newhew, such help as  
becomes a relation to give.

My life and my goods I engage at your  
service to cheerfully place,

Said the badger, and Reynard replied: Be  
sure I shall bear this in mind;

So long as I live, it shall tend to your  
gain. The other rejoined:

Go boldly your judges to face, and your  
cause do your best to defend.

What you have to urge they will hear;  
Lupardus himself has declared

That punished you ought not to be, till you  
have been given the chance 210

To fully put in your defence, and the  
queen doth herself think the same.

This circumstance note and endeavor to use.

Then Reynard remarked:

Be only composed and all will go well.  
The irascible king,

When he hears me, will alter his mind;  
it all will come right in the end.

And thus went the two within doors, and  
there they with kindness were met,  
And well by the housewife received;  
whatever she had she brought forth.  
Among them the pigeons were shared, and  
tasteful and good they were found;  
And each ate his share, still they had not  
enough and undoubtedly would  
Have well a half-dozen consumed, if but  
they had been to be had.

To the badger then Reynard remarked:  
You must, my dear uncle, admit 220  
That I've children of qualities rare, with  
whom every one must be pleased.  
Now tell me how Rossel you like, and  
Reinhart, the little one, too.  
Some day they our race will augment; they  
little by little begin

Themselves to improve, and to me are a  
pleasure from morning to night.  
The one can lay hold of a fowl and the  
other a chicken ensnare;  
And well to the water they take, in order  
young ducklings to fetch,  
Or a plover, perchance. To send them more  
often to hunt I should like,  
But taught must they be, above all, with  
prudence and caution to act,  
That springes and hunters and dogs they well  
may know how to avoid;  
And then, if right methods they learn, and  
reliable evidence give 230  
That they are well trained, as is fitting  
they should, then daily they ought  
Provisions to find and bring in, and nought  
should be wanting at home.  
For both of them take after me and join  
in the fiercest of sports;  
And, when they begin so to play, all others  
come off second best;  
Their rival them feels at his throat and  
struggles not long after that;

Which is Reynard's own manner of sport.

They also are swift in their grip,  
And sure is the spring that they give,  
which methinks is precisely the thing.

To this Grimbart said: To honor it tends,  
and one may rejoice,  
Young children to have such as one would  
desire, and who in their craft  
Get early adroit, their parents to help. I  
am very much pleased 240  
To know them to be of my race, and hope  
for the best at their hands.

That matter we'll leave for today, said  
Reynard, and now let us go  
To our rest, for we all are fatigued, and  
Grimbart's completely worn out.  
At this they lay down in the room, which,  
over the whole of its floor,  
Was covered with hay and with leaves, and  
there all together they slept.

But Reynard, through fear, kept awake; the  
matter appeared to him, now

Of counsel the best to demand, and morn-  
ing still found him in thought.

He got himself up from his couch, and unto  
his wife he observed:

You will not be worried, I trust, but Grim-  
bart has come to entreat

That I go with him back to the court.

You tranquilly rest here at home. 250

Should any one speak about me, make the  
best of the case that you can,

And lock up the castle with care; this do,  
and then all will go well.

And Ermelyn said: It seems to me  
strange that you dare to present

Yourself any more at the court, where you  
are so lowly esteemed.

Is it so that you must? I can't make it  
out. Consider the past.

Indeed, said Reynard to this, no jesting  
affair was it then;

For many were seeking my harm, and I  
came into terrible straits.

But very diverse are the things that, under  
the sun, come about.

Against expectation, at times, we of this  
and of that have a taste;

And who thinks that he anything has, may  
suddenly find that it's gone. 260

So let me, I pray you, depart; for I there  
have a great deal to do.

Keep calm! That I earnestly beg; there  
is not any reason for you

To worry yourself. The issue await, for,  
my dear, you will see,

If only I can it effect, me in five or six  
days again back.

And then went he forth on his way, with  
Grimbart, the badger, as guard. 265



## CANTO EIGHT

And now both together they went still  
further on over the heath,  
Grimbart and Reynard the fox, direct to  
the court of the king;  
And Reynard remarked on the road: Let  
matters turn out as they may,  
I now a presentiment feel that our trip  
advantageous will prove.  
Dear uncle, attend to me, pray! Since last  
unto you I confessed  
New slips have I made again back into  
culpable actions and thoughts;  
The grave and the minor things hear, as  
well as what then I forgot.

From the body and hide of the bear I  
caused to be cut for my use  
A large and available piece, and to me  
have the wolf and his wife  
Been forced to relinquish their shoes; in  
this way I vented my spleen. 10

All this was by lying procured; I knew  
very well how the king  
To provoke, and him in this manner have  
duped to a frightful extent,  
For I told him a wonderful yarn and fanciful  
treasures devised.  
But that did not make me content, so  
Lampen I sent to his death,  
And Bellyn packed off with the murder'd  
one's head. The king was enraged  
As soon as he noticed the ram, and made  
him the reckoning pay.  
The coney I pinched as hard as I could  
at the back of his ears,  
And nearly deprived of his life, and then  
out of temper became,  
Because he made good his escape. I must  
also confess that the crow  
Not at all with injustice complained, for  
Keenbeak, his dear little wife, 20  
I devoured. Such are the deeds I have  
done since last I confessed.  
But there's one thing which then I forgot,  
and which to you now I will tell;

An infamous trick that I played, and which  
it is right you should know,  
For I do not desire any more such a burden  
to bear. On the back  
Of the wolf I saddled it then; we were  
walking together one day,  
Elvarden and Houltulst between, when, a  
short distance off, we espied  
A mare in a field with her foal, and each  
of the two were alike  
As black as a raven in hue; in age the  
young foal might have been  
Approaching four months. With hunger  
was Isengrim racked, so he begged  
Me to go and enquire of the mare if she  
would not sell us the foal, 30  
And also the price. So to her I proceeded  
and ventured the thing.  
My dear mistress mare, to her I observed,  
the foal is your own,  
As I know; will you sell it to me? To  
ascertain that is my wish.  
She replied: If enough you will pay I with-  
out it can very well do,

And the sum for its purchase required,  
that you may see for yourself;  
Behind, upon one of my feet, you will find  
it engraved. Then I saw  
What she meant, and thereto I replied:  
I must to you freely confess  
That reading and writing with me are not  
the success I could wish,  
Nor indeed do I covet the child for myself;  
it was Isengrim wished  
Your terms with exactness to learn, and  
sent me to you to find out. 40

She said in reply: Let him come; he then  
can find out what he wants.  
I left her and Isengrim found where still he  
was waiting for me.  
If you would your hunger appease, just go,  
I announced, and the mare  
Will give you the colt; the price can be  
found on one of her hoofs,  
Engraved on the frog. I could, she re-  
marked, try to find it myself;





“ ‘If you would your hunger appease, just go,’ I announced,  
‘And the mare will give you the colt.’ ”

But I, to my shame and chagrin, many  
things am compelled to let slip,  
For reading and writing I never was  
taught. My uncle, you try,  
And look at what there is inscribed; you  
may it decipher, perhaps.

Quoth Isengrim then: Not read it you say?  
To me that were strange!  
German, Italian, and French, and Latin I  
thoroughly know, 50  
For a steady attendant I've been at the  
schools which in Erfurt are found.  
With the learned and wise of the place,  
including the masters of law,  
Have judgments and questions exchanged,  
and also my license received  
In regular form; and of writings, all kinds  
that can ever be found  
I can read with the ease of my name; I  
therefore today shall not fail.  
Wait here! I will go and the letters  
peruse, and then we shall see.

He went and enquired of the mare: How  
much do you ask for the foal?  
Make it cheap! She thereupon said: The  
amount you can read for yourself;  
You will find it on one of my feet, a hind  
one, distinctly engraved.  
Let me see it, responded the wolf. She  
said: I will do as you wish. 60  
Then up from the grass went her foot, on  
which had been fastened a shoe,  
Beset with a half-dozen nails; straight  
out flew her hoof, and went wide  
Not so much as a hair; hit him plump on  
his skull, and he fell to the earth,  
And lay there as though he were dead.  
She galloped, however, from there  
As fast as she could. Thus wounded he  
lay and long so remained.  
An hour passed away, to move then again  
he began, and he howled  
Like a dog. I trotted then up to his side  
and sir uncle, I said,  
Pray, where is the mare? How tasted the  
colt? You feasted yourself



And me quite forgot; that was wrong, for  
I it was brought you the news;  
After eating, a nap you enjoyed; now tell  
me, I beg you, how ran 70  
The writing found under the hoof? An  
eminent scholar you are.

Said he: Are you bantering still? Just  
now have gone matters with me  
Ill enough! In truth, would a stone  
some pity upon me bestow.  
That long-leggéd jade of a mare! May  
the hangman pay it her back!  
For clouted with iron was her foot; and  
these were the letters I found:  
Some nails newly forged! From which I  
received six wounds in my head.

He hardly got off with his life. I now  
have confessed to you all,  
And pardon, dear nephew, I crave for  
these my iniquitous works.

How things may turn out at the court is  
not sure; however, I have  
My conscience relieved of a load, and  
washed myself clean from my sins. 80  
Now tell me how I may reform, in order  
remission to gain.

Then Grimbart replied: I find you encum-  
bered afresh with misdeeds:  
Still, the dead cannot live any more. Far  
better, indeed, would it be,  
If life you'd allowed them to keep. Yet,  
uncle, I now am disposed,  
On account of the terrible hour, and because  
of the nearness of death,  
That menaces you, your sins to remit, as  
the servant of Christ;  
For relentless they follow you up, and I  
tremble with fear for the worst.  
Above all, for the head of the hare will  
vengeance against you be sought;  
Extremely audacious it was, I must own,  
our monarch to vex,

And is of more damage to you than you,  
in your foolishness, thought. 90

Not a scrap, responded the scamp. Here's  
something I wish you to hear:

To live without sin in the world is something uncommonly rare.

One cannot so holy be kept, as when in a  
cloister, you know;

If a man has with honey to deal, his  
fingers he licks now and then.

Now Lampen me greatly annoyed, for backwards and forwards he skipped

In front of my eyes all about; his fat little  
body I liked,

And love I let go to the dogs. To Bellyn  
I'd reason to wish

But little that's good. The damage is  
theirs, the sin is mine own.

But they were in measure so coarse, and in  
all, whatsoever they did,

So stupid and dull. Needed I, then, observe  
strict decorum with them? 100

Small liking had I for such things; myself,  
at that time, from the court  
I had with anxiety saved, and taught them  
in this and in that,  
But 'twas all of no use. Each ought, it  
is true, his neighbor to love,  
That I'm constrained to admit, still I held  
them in little esteem;  
And dead is dead, as you your own self  
have remarked; then permit  
Us of other things now to converse. In  
truth, these are dangerous times!  
In high life and low what is now going  
on? But talk we must not;  
Yet cannot help using our eyes and having  
some thoughts of our own.

The king himself steals, as we know, like  
all the rest of the crowd;  
What he does not lay hands on himself he  
orders the bears and the wolves 110  
To secure, and believes that so doing is  
right. There is none to be found

Who will venture to tell him the truth,  
not even confessor or priest,  
So deep has the evil struck root. They  
are dumb! and why is this so?  
With him they the plunder enjoy, no mat-  
ter how small is the gain.  
Should any one go and complain, with equal  
advantage he might  
Reach out for the air; he squanders his  
time, and had better employ  
Himself in some other pursuit. For gone  
is gone, and when once  
From you a more potent one takes what  
you have possessed, to your plaint  
But little attention is paid, and wearisome  
gets it at last.  
The lion's our monarch and lord, and all  
things to seize for himself 120  
He considers as due to his rank. As a  
rule, us his people he calls,  
And certainly all that is ours appears to  
belong unto him.

Wilt allow me, my uncle, to speak? Our  
king is the fondest, by far,  
Of those with full hands who approach, and  
who, in accord with the tune  
That is piped, understand how to dance;  
too clearly is that to be seen.  
That the wolf and the bear have obtained  
access to his council again  
Is to many a wrong; they steal and they  
rob, yet are loved by the king.  
All see it, and yet nothing say, each hoping  
that his turn will come.  
Over four there are thus to be found, hav-  
ing place at the side of the king,  
Who favored are more than the rest, and  
greatest of all are at court. 130  
But if a poor devil like me put hands  
upon even a chick,  
Upon him, they pounce all at once and  
follow till he has been caught;  
And then, with one voice, they condemn the  
fellow with clamor to death.  
Petty robbers are hanged on the spot, the  
bigger ones get for themselves

Advantages great. They govern the land  
and the castles possess.

See, uncle, I notice all this, and upon it  
can't help but reflect.

My own game I thereupon play and, more-  
over, I think very oft

That right it assuredly is, since such a great  
number so act.

To be sure, then my conscience wakes up  
and pictures to me, from afar,

The anger and justice of God, and makes  
me reflect on the end. 140

For injustice, no matter how small, compen-  
sation at last must be made.

Repentance at heart I then feel; it lasts,  
however, not long.

Indeed, what good does it do to belong to  
the best? For the best

From slander's vile tongue, in these times,  
remain not in safety exempt.

The people now think it their right into  
all kinds of things to enquire,

And no one they lightly forget; they invent  
even this thing and that.

Little good in the commons is found, but  
few of them really deserve  
To have for their rulers and lords such  
men as are honest and just;  
For of that which is evil they sing, and  
ever and ever they talk;  
They know what is good in their lords, be  
high or be low their degree, 150  
Yet this they say nothing about, and seldom  
we find it discussed.  
Worst of all is, however, to me the conceit  
of that notion so false,  
Which gets such a hold of mankind, that  
any one can, in the strife  
Of a vehement, turbulent will, direct the  
affairs of the world.  
Should each one his children and wife,  
however, in order maintain,  
Or his insolent servants contrive to subdue,  
then in calmness he could,  
While fools are expending their means,  
rejoice in a temperate life.  
But how shall the world be improved,  
when each allows all to himself,



And determines the rest of mankind by  
force to bring under his rule?  
Thus deeper, and deeper, for aye, into all  
that is wicked we sink. 160  
Slander and treason and lies, and taking of  
oaths that are false,  
Embezzlement, murder, and theft, one hears  
nought of anything else;  
False prophets and hypocrites both are  
shamefully cheating mankind.

Thus every one passes his life; and, if they  
be faithfully warned,  
They receive it with scorn, and remark:  
Oh yes! but if sin were, indeed,  
So painful and hard to be borne as learned  
men here and there preach,  
Then surely the parsons themselves would  
try from all faults to be free.  
Bad example they plead as excuse, and in  
that are precisely allied  
To the whole of the simian race, which,  
formed but to mimic and mock,

Yet having nor reason nor choice, must  
suffer ineffable harm. 170

Of a truth, ought the men of the cloth  
themselves to more fitly demean.  
Very much could by them be achieved, if  
it only in private they did;  
But they care not a tittle for us outside of  
their calling and craft,  
And practice whatever they please in front  
of our eyes, as if we  
Were stricken with blindness complete; too  
clearly however we see  
That their vows rejoice the good Lord to  
fully as small an extent  
As suit they their fallible friends, whose  
lives by the world are absorbed.

Thus do the priests, as a rule, on the  
opposite side of the Alps,  
Their own precious darlings enjoy; in these  
regions also there are

As many who sinfully act. But I shall be  
told that they have 180  
Their children like those who in wedlock  
are joined; and them to maintain  
They struggle with ardor and zeal, and  
raise them high up in the world.  
But afterwards these can reflect no more  
whence their fathers arose,  
And to none will precedency yield, but  
proudly and haughtily walk  
As if they were noble of race, and always  
are firm in the thought  
That the matter is strictly correct. A custom  
of yore it was not  
So high to regard the children of priests,  
but now are they all  
As my lords and my ladies addressed. Yes,  
money can do what it will.  
It is seldom a princely estate can be found,  
where the parsons do not  
Make a levy of taxes and rents, and extort  
from the village and mill. 190  
They turn topsy-turvy the world, and com-  
mon folk wickedness learn;

For 'tis plain when the clergy thus do,  
that all in their sins will indulge,  
And the blind will be leading the blind  
away from whatever is good.  
Indeed, who has ever remarked the good  
works of these heaven-born priests,  
And how they the holy church, by example  
of goodness, build up?  
Who ever lives now in such way? We  
are simply confirmed in our sins.  
Thus it now with the people befalls, so  
how can the world then improve?

But listen still further to me! If one  
out of wedlock is born,  
Then let him thereover be still. What  
more can he do in the case?  
Now I mean only this understand: If any  
such one shall himself 200  
But simply with meekness conduct, and not  
with an air of conceit  
His fellows provoke, no offence is received,  
and one would be wrong

To make it a subject of talk. Our birth  
has no power us to make  
Either good or exalted in mind, nor can it  
be held for reproach;  
But virtue and vice are the things that  
make true distinctions in man.  
Men of learning and worth in the church  
are ever with justice esteemed  
And honored by all; but the wicked a  
wicked example present.  
Should such a one preach at his best, yet  
at length will the laity say:  
When he righteousness talks and wickedness  
does, how are we to select?  
Nor is he of use to the church; to each  
in his sermons he says: 210  
Give money to keep up the church; that,  
beloved, is what I advise,  
If indulgence and mercy you wish to obtain.  
Thus his discourse he ends.  
And does precious little to help, indeed, not  
a thing; and, for all  
That he cares, might the church tumble  
down. Still further to go, he esteems

The best kind of life to be this: in costly  
attire to be clothed,  
And to eat of the daintiest food. And in  
worldly affairs if he finds  
Himself overwhelmed with concern, how can  
he in worship engage?  
Good parsons in serving the Lord are daily  
and hourly employed,  
And put into practice the good; and thus  
to the holy church  
Of the greatest of service they are; and,  
through good example, their flocks, 220  
To the gate of salvation they lead, by the  
way that is narrow and strait.

But I know the behooded as well; they  
prattle and jabber and prate  
Ever concerning their forms, and are always  
in search of the rich;  
The people to flatter know how, and love  
to be called as their guests.  
Invite you but one, then a second arrives,  
and you further will find

Yet two or three others appear. Then  
again, in the convent the one  
Who well understands how to talk the  
quickest promotion will gain;  
The lector is sure to become, or may be  
the custos or prior.  
The others are pushed to one side. The  
dishes are furnished and served  
In quite a dissimilar way; for some must,  
of nights, in the choir 230  
Sing and read, and visit the haunts of the  
dead, while others obtain  
Great favors, and rest can procure, and eat  
the most costly of food.

The legates likewise of the pope, the abbots  
and prelates and monks,  
The beguins and even the nuns, of all a  
great deal might be said.  
Everywhere is the cry: Give me what is  
yours and touch not what's mine.  
In truth, there are few to be found, not  
seven, who live in accord

With the brotherhood's precepts and rules,  
as a pattern of virtuous life.  
The priesthood is thus to be found most  
thoroughly rotten and weak.

My uncle, the badger replied, I see you  
minutely confess  
Exotical sins. What advantageth that?  
Methinks there must be 240  
Enough of your own. And tell me, my  
uncle, why you should concern  
Yourself with the clergy's affairs and this  
thing and that, as you do?  
Let each his own burden take up, and each  
and every one give  
Account of himself, how he in his station  
of life doth attempt  
His duty to do, which is something that  
no one on earth may neglect,  
Not either the old or the young, in cloister  
or out in the world.  
You talk altogether too much about things  
of all kinds, and at length



Might me into error seduce. So thoroughly  
    well you're aware  
How now is directed the world, and all its  
    affairs are ordained,  
That none for a parson is better endowed.  
    With the rest of the sheep,           250  
I would come to confess at your house, and  
    under your teaching would sit,  
Of your wisdom a knowledge to get; for I  
    am compelled to admit  
That stupid and rough the most of us are,  
    and need good advice.

When they, in such converse as this, had  
    come pretty near to the court,  
Reynard said: Thus now is the Rubicon  
    passed! and he roused himself up.  
And they came upon Martin the ape, who,  
    just at that time, had set forth,  
With intention to travel to Rome. He  
    gave a good day to them both.  
Dear uncle, stand well to your guns, he  
    sagely remarked to the fox,

And asked about this thing and that,  
although the whole matter he knew.  
Ah! how in these lattermost days does fortune  
against me take sides, 260  
Said Reynard to him in reply; some thieves  
have been at it again  
And accused me once more, I know not of  
whom they consist, but in chief  
Are the wretched young rabbit and crow;  
the one is bereft of his wife,  
And the other of one of his ears. Now  
what do I care about that?  
Could only I speak with the king, then  
smart should they both for their pains.  
But most I'm impeded by this, that under  
the ban of the pope  
I still, to my sorrow, remain. The dean  
has full power in the case,  
And he is esteemed by the king. Now  
the ban has upon me been put  
Entirely for Isengrim's sake, who once had  
become a recluse,  
But ran from the convent away, wherein he  
sojourned at Elkmar. 270

He swore that he could not so live, for he  
was too strictly confined,  
From food had too long to abstain, nor  
could so much reading endure;  
So I helped him away from the place. It  
repents me the deed to have done,  
For he slanders me now to the king and  
ever me seeks to disgrace.  
To Rome must I go? In the meantime at  
home will my family be  
At loss what to do for themselves, for the  
wolf cannot leave them alone,  
But molests them where meet them he may.  
Then again, very many there are  
Who think nought but evil of me, and  
seize on whatever is mine.  
If I were released from the ban, in far  
better state should I be,  
My fortune again at the court to follow  
with comfort and ease. 280

Then Martin replied: I can help you in  
this; it happens that I,

Just now am departing for Rome, and you  
with some dodges can serve.  
Oppressed will I not let you be! As clerk  
to the bishop, methinks  
I know how the work should be done. I  
surely will see that the dean  
Forthwith shall be cited to Rome, and then  
I against him will fight.  
Mind, uncle, the business I'll push, and  
how to direct it I know.  
I'll see that the judgment's enforced; you  
doubtless through me, will obtain  
Your discharge; I will fetch it myself, and  
then shall your enemies all  
Laugh the wrong side of their face; both  
money and pains they shall lose.  
I well understand how matters are managed  
at Rome, and I know 290  
What ought and ought not to be done.  
My uncle, lord Simony's there,  
Well regarded and mighty he is, and help  
gives to all who well pay;  
Sir Pluralist too, such a lord! Doctor  
Skinflint and others beside;

And Turncoat and Trimmer to boot, I have  
the whole lot for my friends.  
My funds I have sent on ahead, for thus,  
you must know, does one there  
The best of impressions produce. Of cita-  
tions, indeed, they discourse,  
But money alone they desire; and let the  
whole matter be found  
How crooked soever it may, with good pay  
I will straighten it out.  
If money you bring, then grace you'll  
obtain, but let you it lack,  
The doors then against you closed. You  
tranquilly rest here at home; 300  
Your business I'll take on myself, and  
loosen its knottiest knots.  
You now go your way to the court, Dame  
Rückenau there you will find,  
My spouse, who is held in the highest  
esteem by our master the king,  
As also she is by the queen. She is  
quick in the use of her wit,  
So tell her the case; she is wise and  
intercedes gladly for friends;

Many relatives there you will find. It  
does not, at all times, avail  
The right of a matter to have. Two sis-  
ters with her you will find,  
And three of my children as well, besides  
many more of your race,  
To render you service prepared in whatever  
way you desire.  
And should you your rights be denied, you  
then will some knowledge obtain 310  
Of what I can do; and if you're oppressed,  
let me quickly it know,  
And I'll have the whole land placed under  
the ban, the monarch and all  
Of the women and children and men. An  
interdict I will have sent,  
And no one shall sing any more, nor cele-  
brate mass, nor baptize,  
Nor bury, whatever it be. Take comfort,  
my nephew, in this!

For aged and sick is the pope; himself he  
no longer concerns

With affairs, and is little esteemed. Also  
now at the court of the king  
Has cardinal Querulous absolute power, and  
he is a young  
And a vigorous man, a mettlesome man,  
with a mind of his own.  
He's in love with a woman I know, and  
she him a letter shall take, 320  
And what it may be she demands she  
knows very well how to get;  
And his writer John Faction is there, who  
is most precisely informed  
In coins, whether ancient or new; then  
Jonathan Pry, his compeer,  
Is a gay hanger on of the court; and the  
notary, Slippery Dick,  
A bachelor is of both kinds of law, and if  
he shall remain  
Yet longer a year, then in practical writings  
he perfect will be.  
Beyond these, two judges are there, who  
go by the names of Lovegold  
And Palmitch; and if they any ruling pro-  
nounce, then as law it remains.

Thus put into practice in Rome are many  
a prank and a trick  
That knows the pope nothing about.  
Friends must we make for ourselves, 330  
For by them are forgiven our sins, and also  
are persons released  
From the ban. My dearest of uncles, you  
may surely rely upon this!  
For long has the king been aware that I  
will not allow you to fall.  
Your case I will see to its end, and that  
I am able to do:  
He would\* also do well to reflect that many  
there are, to the apes  
And the foxes connected by ties, who best  
him with counsel assist;  
And that will you certainly help, go mat-  
ters however they may.

Reynard then spake: This comforts me  
much; I shall bear it in mind,  
Should now I but get myself free. Then  
each of the other took leave.



Under safeguard of Grimbart the badger  
alone now Reynard pursued  
His way to the court of the king, where  
bitter against him they felt. 341

## CANTO NINE

Sir Reynard had come to the court, believing  
that he could avert  
The actions which threatened him there,  
yet as he went in and perceived  
Together his numerous foes, as all stood  
about in the place,  
Each eager himself to avenge, and him to  
see punished with death,  
His courage gave way; he began to distrust,  
yet boldly he walked  
Right in through the midst of the lords,  
with Grimbart along at his side.  
They came to the throne of the king, and  
Grimbart there whispered and said:  
Now Reynard, give way to no fear; to the  
timid, remember, be sure,  
Will fortune her favors not grant; the  
daring do danger invite,  
And joy in its presence to be; it helps  
them again to escape. 10  
Reynard said: You tell me the truth, and  
I give you my heartiest thanks

For the splendid support of your words; if  
ever again I get free.

I shall bear them in mind. He looked  
now around, and many of kin

Could in the assemblage be seen, yet few  
as supporters to claim.

Nearly all he was wont to ill-treat; with  
the otters and beavers, indeed,

Alike both the great and the small, he had  
practiced his villainous tricks;

Yet discovered he plenty of friends inside  
of the hall of the king.

In front of the throne he bowed to the  
earth and soberly said:

May God, from whom nothing is hid, and  
who ever mighty remains,

Preserve you, my lord and my king, and  
also preserve, none the less, 20

Our sovereign lady the queen, and jointly  
may he on you both

Perception and wisdom bestow, so that you  
with discretion may now

Distinguish the right from the wrong, for  
much of deception there is  
In vogue among men in these days. Thus  
outwardly many things seem  
What, in matter of fact, they are not.  
Had each on his forehead engraved  
What he thinks, and the king should it  
see, it then would be clearly revealed  
That utter untruths I do not, and to serve  
you am always prepared.  
The wicked, I know, do me gravely accuse,  
and would greatly delight  
To disgrace, and out from your favor to  
oust, as if of the same  
I had unworthy been found. But of justice  
I know the strong love 30  
Of my sovereign master and king, for him  
has none ever induced  
The way of the law to obstruct, and thus  
will it ever remain.

Now all of them came and pressed in,  
and every one there was bewitched

By Reynard's intrepid display, and him was  
each aching to hear.

His criminal deeds were all known, how  
then could he think to escape?

Reynard, you knave, said the king, think  
not any more that your words,

So glibly pronounced, will you save; no  
longer are they of avail

To cover deception and lies; your game  
has now come to an end.

Your faithful devotion to me, you have, I  
believe, well evinced

On the rabbit as well as the crow! Suffi-  
cient were that of itself; 40

But treason you bring into play, whether  
home or abroad you may be,

Your strokes are malicious and prompt, yet  
not any further will they

Be endured, your measure is full; but I  
will no longer reprove.

Reynard thought: What now can I do?  
Oh, could I again but succeed

In getting once more to my home! But  
where shall I look for the means?  
However it goes, through with it I must.  
Let us everything try.

Most noble sovereign, mighty king, he began  
to hold forth,  
If you think I have merited death, then  
my case you assuredly have  
Beheld from a wrong point of view; I  
therefore implore that you will  
At least hear me through. Till now I  
have you to your profit advised, 50  
In need I have stood at your side, when  
some, as you know, fell away,  
Who between us are pushing themselves,  
my ruin to try to effect,  
And their chances improve while I am  
away. With them you might well,  
Noble king, when I have to speak been  
allowed, the matter adjust.  
After that, if guilty I'm found, my fate I  
of course must endure.

But little of me have you thought, while I,  
all over the land,  
In different places about, have the closest  
of watches maintained.  
Think you that I now should come to the  
court, if I myself knew  
To be guilty of great or e'en little mis-  
deeds? With prudence I should  
Have fled from the place where you are,  
and my enemies tried to avoid. 60  
No indeed, from my stronghold at home,  
most assuredly would  
Not all the world's gold have me here been  
able to tempt, for I there  
Was free on my own ground and soil.  
But in fact I no consciousness have  
Of one evil deed that I've done, so here  
my appearance have made.  
I was staying for nought but to watch;  
there brought me my uncle the news  
That I was required at the court. I had  
just been thinking afresh  
How might I get rid of the ban, and there-  
over, with Martin the ape,

Much converse have recently had, who  
sacredly promised he would  
From the incubus get me set free. I,  
myself, am in transit to Rome,  
He remarked, and from now to its end the  
matter I fully will take 70  
On myself; go you to the court and you  
shall get rid of the ban.  
Lo! thus me did Martin advise, and what  
he's about he must know,  
For the eminent bishop, lord Waver, him  
constantly has in employ;  
For fully five years has Martin him served  
in judicial affairs.  
And thus come I here to your court, com-  
plaint on complaint but to find.  
The coney backbites me, the toad; now  
Reynard, however, is here  
In person himself, so let him come forward  
and speak to my face;  
For indeed 'tis an easy affair complaints of  
the absent to bring;  
But the opposite side must be heard, ere  
the matter to judgment shall come.



Those treacherous comrades of mine! By  
all that is holy, they have 80  
Themselves well enjoyed at my hands, the  
rabbit as well as the crow.

The day before yesterday morn, ere the  
sun had got up, I was met  
By the rabbit, who greeted me fair; at  
that very moment myself

I in front of my castle had placed, for  
reading the prayers of the day;

He made me aware that he was en route  
to the court; then I said:

May God you attend! At this he com-  
plained of how hungry and tired

He had grown. Then friendly I asked:  
Desire you not something to eat?

With thankfulness I will accept, he replied.

I said in response:

I will gladly it give. So I went with him  
in and, quick as could be,

I cherries and butter produced; for on  
Wednesdays I never eat meat. 90

And he ate, to his heart's content, of bread  
and of butter and fruits.

But now the last born of my sons stepped  
up to the table, to see  
If anything over remained, for children do  
always love food.  
At something the lad made a grab, when  
the rabbit him gave such a blow,  
With suddenness over his mouth, that from  
lips and from teeth ran the blood.  
Now Reinhart, my other young son, saw  
the blow and the hypocrite seized  
Direct by the throat, played well his own  
game, and his brother avenged.  
That happened; not more and not less. I  
tarried not long from the spot,  
But ran and chastised the two boys, and  
managed with trouble them both  
Away from the rabbit to get. His punish-  
ment let him endure, 100  
For he merited more than he got, and the  
youngsters could well, I am sure,  
Had I any evil desired, have thoroughly  
finished him up.  
And thus he now gives me his thanks!  
He says that I pulled off his ear;

Yet he was with honor received, a token  
of which he has kept.

To me, after this, came the crow, and his  
lamentation poured forth;  
His wife he had lost, who had eaten  
too much and herself had thus killed,  
For a fish of a passable size, with all of its  
bones, she had gulped.  
As to where the misfortune occurred, that  
he can best tell; but he says  
That I have her slain. I'll wager he did  
it himself, and if he  
Were earnestly asked if I had it done, his  
tune he would change. 110  
Crows fly up too far in the air, no  
jump can attain such a height.

If any one wish to accuse me of actions  
forbidden like these,  
Let him do it with evidence lawful and  
just, for thus is it fit

To prosecute worshipful men; this ought I  
at least to expect.  
But if none of this kind can be found, yet  
another resource is at hand;  
Here! I am prepared for a tilt! Let the  
day be appointed and place,  
Then let an opponent of worth himself  
introduce in the list,  
With me a full equal by birth, then each  
can proceed with his claim;  
Who honor shall gain in the strife, with  
him let it ever remain;  
Things always have thus been set right,  
and I nothing better demand. 120

All stood there and heard what he said,  
and everyone at the words  
Of Reynard was greatly surprised, which he  
had so boldly pronounced.  
And as to the rabbit and crow, they both  
were confounded with fright;  
They quitted the court and ventured not  
further to utter a word;

But each to the other remarked: 'Twould  
not quite advisable be  
With him any more to dispute; all means  
that we know we might try,  
And then not be near to success. Who is  
there that saw what he did?  
Alone with the rascal we were, for witness  
then whom could we get?  
After all the disgrace would be ours. For  
all of his numberless crimes  
May the hangman upon him await, and  
pay him as he has deserved! 130  
He would like us in combat to meet?  
That might with us badly turn out.  
No, in truth! that's a thing we would rather  
avoid; for nimble and false,  
Deceitful and base, we know him to be.  
Indeed we, all five,  
Should not against him be enough, and  
dearly therefor should we pay.

But Bruin and Isengrim both were ill at  
their ease; they observed,

With annoyance, the two sneak away from  
the place. The monarch then said:

If any one yet has complaint, let him come!

We will hear what it is.

So many but yesterday blamed, here stands  
the accused! Where are they?

Quoth Reynard at this: Thus it commonly  
goes; either this one or that

Is impeached, yet, when he comes, here his  
accusers remain at their homes. 140

These two little mischievous rogues, the  
rabbit and likewise the crow,

Would gladly have brought me to shame,  
and damage and punishment too.

But now they apologies make, and I them  
forgive; for, indeed,

They hesitate, now that I'm here, and slip  
aside out of the way.

How I should have made them ashamed!

You see how with danger 'tis fraught,

Your ear to the wretched defamers of  
servants not present to lend.

The law they do naught but pervert, and  
are hateful to all of true worth.  
For the rest only pity I feel, and care  
not about them a straw.

Attend! said the king upon this, you traitor  
malicious and mean!  
Pray tell us what urged you to this, that  
Lampen, the trusted and true, 150  
Who used my despatches to bear, you killed  
in so shameful a way?  
Had I not forgiven you all, so far as you  
ever had sinned?  
From me you received both a wallet and  
staff, thus provided you were  
For a journey to Rome and over the sea;  
you nothing I grudged,  
And hoped for amendment from you; but  
now I find out, at the start,  
How Lampen of life you deprived, and  
Bellyn as messenger made  
You to serve, to bring in the knapsack his  
head; and who, when he came,

Said out, before all, that despatches he  
brought, which together had you  
Indited and penned; and you, to the best  
of his power, he had helped;  
And I found in the knapsack the head, no  
more and no less than the head. 160  
This was done in defiance of me, and Bel-  
lyn at once I retained  
As a pledge, his life was the price, and  
now we will see about yours.

Reynard said: What's this that I hear?  
Lampen is killed? And I find  
My Bellyn no more? What of me will  
become? Oh, dead that I were!  
Ah me! With them I have lost a trea-  
sure unequalled in worth.  
I sent you some jewels by them, none better  
nor finer than which,  
All over the world, can be found. Who  
could have believed that the ram  
Would Lampen have murdered like this,  
and you of those riches have robbed?



One must be on one's guard, even when  
no suspicion of danger exists.

In fury, the king would not hear the whole  
of what Reynard would say; 170

To his chamber he turned himself off, not  
having with clearness, indeed,

Reynard's words understood; and him he  
intended to punish with death.

And, as soon as he came to his room, he  
found in his presence the queen,

Who there, with dame Rückenau, stood.

Now the ape was especially dear

To king, as well as to queen, which useful  
to Reynard would be.

Accomplished and prudent she was, and  
very proficient in speech;

Where'er she appeared, a sensation she  
made, and was honored by all.

The king's indignation she saw, and to  
him circumspectly she said:

When you, gracious master and king, have  
hearkened at times to my suit,

No cause have you had for regret; you  
always my boldness condoned 180  
In speaking a quieting word when some-  
thing your anger had roused.  
At present be likewise disposed to listen  
to me; it concerns  
My own proper race, of a truth! And  
who can one's own disavow?  
Now Reynard, whate'er he may be, is a  
kinsman of mine, and if I  
Shall frankly confess how his conduct  
appears unto me, I must say,  
Since now to the law he submits, I think  
very well of his case.  
His father, like him, was compelled, not-  
withstanding the favor of yours,  
Much evil from venomous tongues and per-  
jured accusers to bear;  
Yet always he put them to shame. So  
soon as more closely his case  
Was examined, quite clear it became; but  
yet did the envious knaves 190  
Try even his merits to make as heinous  
transgressions appear.



“Now Reynard, whate’er he may be, is a kinsman of mine.”

Thus ever himself he maintained in greater  
esteem at the court  
Than Bruin and Isengrim now; indeed,  
'twere of these to be wished  
That they should be able to cast the griev-  
ances all on one side,  
That are constantly heard about them; but  
little do they apprehend  
Of justice and right, as is shown by their  
counsel as well as their life.

Here answered, however, the king: But  
how can it cause you surprise,  
That I am with Reynard provoked? The  
thief who, a short time ago,  
Put Lampen to death, led Bellyn astray,  
and with insolence now  
All flatly denies, and himself, as a servant  
straightforward and true, 200  
Has boldness enough to extol! In the  
meantime do all as one man  
Raise with loud voices complaints, and only  
too clearly show forth .

How he my safe-conduct defies, and also  
how he, with his thefts,  
His robbings and murders, the land and my  
faithful retainers despoils.

Indeed, I'll no longer it bear! In answer  
thereto said the ape:

In truth not to many is granted the gift,  
in things of all kinds,

To act with discretion and counsel with  
skill, and he who succeeds

Will certainly confidence earn but the en-  
vious try all they can

To covertly do him a hurt; and, soon as  
their numbers increase,

They openly make their attempts. With  
Reynard it often has thus 210

Of yore come about; they cannot, however,  
efface from our minds

How he has you wisely advised in cases  
where others were dumb.

You know (it but lately took place) how the  
man and the serpent came here

To solicit your aid, and the case there was  
none who knew how to decide;



But Reynard discovered a way, and you  
lauded him then before all.

To this did the monarch rejoin, after brief  
meditation, thereon:

I remember the matter quite well, yet now  
it has gone from my mind

How in detail it all came about; it was  
somewhat entangled, methinks.

If you can still say how it was, I gladly  
shall hear your account.

She answered the king: As my lord has  
commanded so shall it be done. 220

Just two years ago or about, a dragon  
appeared and complained,

With turmoil, to you, gracious lord, that a  
peasant could not be induced

Himself to submit to the law; a man against  
whom the decree

Had twice been pronounced. To the court of  
your highness the peasant she brought,

And stated the matter at length, with  
numerous violent words.

Through a hole, that she found in a hedge,  
the serpent intended to crawl,  
But got herself caught in a cord, that in  
front of the breach had been hung;  
Ever tighter was getting the loop, and there  
she her life would have lost,  
Had not, at the opportune time, a vagrant  
been passing along.  
In anguish to him she cried out: Have  
pity and help me get free, 230  
I entreat! To this the man said: Released,  
I will see that you are,  
For your misery causes me grief; but first  
you must give me your word,  
No mischief on me to inflict. The serpent  
agreed to his terms,  
And swore the most solemn of oaths that  
she, in no manner or way,  
Would harm to her rescuer do, and thus  
did the man set her free.



Awhile on together they walked; but the  
serpent was feeling, at length,  
The gnawings of hunger, and flew at the  
man, with intent him to choke  
And devour; and in fear and alarm the  
poor fellow sprang from her side.  
Is this my reward? This have I deserved?  
he cried, and did you  
Not swear the most sacred of oaths? The  
serpent then said in reply: 240  
My hunger impels me, alas! I have no  
control of myself;  
No law does necessity know; it constitutes  
right of itself.

In turn then responded the man: Keep off  
from me only so long  
As we to some people may come, who us  
will impartially judge.  
And thereupon answered the worm: Till  
then I will patience preserve.

Thus further a distance they went, and  
over the water they found

Cutpurse, the raven, along with his son,  
who Croker was called;

And the serpent invited them both to draw  
near, and thus them invoked:

Come here, we have something to say.

The raven them soberly heard,  
And judgment at once he pronounced, the  
man to ingest. Thus he hoped 250

A morsel to get for himself. Much pleased  
was the serpent at this;

Lo! now I have triumphed, she said, and  
none can the blame lay on me.

Not so, then responded the man, my case  
is not utterly lost;

Shall a robber pass sentence of death, or  
one judge alone try the case?

I demand that it further be heard, as equity  
me doth allow;

By four, or by ten if you please, let the  
matter be brought to be heard.

The serpent then said: Let us go. They  
went, and were met, on the road,

By the wolf and the bear, and together  
they all of them walked.

The peasant now everything feared; for him  
in the midst of the five

It dangerous was to remain, seeing what  
kind of fellows they were. 260

The serpent, the ravens, the wolf, and the  
bear hemmed him in all around;

And anxious enough he became, for soon  
did the wolf and the bear

Make up both together their minds, in this  
way their judgment to give:

The serpent might slaughter the man, as a  
ravenous craving for food

Acknowledged no maxim or law; one's  
needs would absolve from an oath.

Now fear and concern on the traveller  
seized, for they all in accord

Were after his life. Then the serpent flew  
out with a furious hiss,

Spitting upon him her spleen, and in terror  
he sprang to one side.

Great wrong, he exclaimed, you commit;  
who you has seen fit to assign,

As master and lord of my life? You heard  
what was said, she replied, 270

Decided the judges have twice, and as often  
your case you have lost.

To her then responded the man: They  
plunder and pilfer, themselves;

I acknowledge them not in the least, the  
case we will take to the king;

When he speaks, I'll submit to his words,  
and if I the loser come out,

In bad enough plight shall I be; I will  
it, however, endure.

The wolf and the bear then mockingly  
said: This plan you can try;

The serpent will certainly win, and better  
can she nothing wish.

They thought that the lords of the court, in  
session, would surely decide

As had they; and they went in good cheer,  
the peasant escorting along.

Before you they came, the serpent, the  
ravens, the wolf, and the bear; 280

Yea, a triplet of wolves was disclosed, for  
two of his children he brought;

Allbelly was one of them called, and Glutton  
the other. These two  
Most trouble occasioned the man; for with  
the intent had they come  
Their own proper share to consume, for  
ever rapacious they are.  
With rudeness unbearable then, before you  
they bellowed and howled,  
Until you expelled from the court both of  
the ill-mannered churls.  
Then the man to your mercy appealed, and  
proceeded his tale to relate:  
How to kill him the serpent had thought;  
and how she his generous act  
Had forgotten, and broken her oath; so  
safety he sought at your hands.  
And the snake contradicted him not: My  
hunger's omnipotent need, 290  
Which knows not the meaning of law,  
irresistibly me did compel.

Good lord, you were greatly perplexed; the  
matter in hand to you seemed

To the brim with suspicion to be, and judicially hard to decide;  
For to you very harsh it appeared, the kind-hearted man to condemn,  
Who himself had beneficent shown; on the other hand still, you bethought  
Of the mischievous hunger as well; you therefore the council convoked.  
Alas! the opinion of most the claim of the man was against,  
For they had an eye to the feast, and thought they the serpent would help.  
But heralds to Reynard you sent, for all of the others, indeed,  
Uttered more words than enough, yet the case could not rightly resolve. 300  
Reynard came and the evidence heard; to him the decision you left;  
As he on the matter should rule, even so should the law be enforced.

Reynard, with prudence, then said: It needful I find, before all,

Myself to betake to the place, that the  
snake in her bonds I may see,  
Just as the peasant her found; after that,  
my decision I'll give.

The serpent was bound then afresh in the  
self-same position and way  
As across her the peasant had come, when  
her in the hedge he had found.

When this had been done, Reynard said:

Here now we find each of the two  
In former condition again, not either has  
won or has lost;

Yet the right is made perfectly plain, as  
seems it to me, of itself; 310

For, provided the man shall see fit, he now  
can the serpent once more

Release from her place in the cord; if not,  
he can there let her hang;

He free and with honor can go, his busi-  
ness to seek and transact.

Since she so untrue has become, when his  
kindness she deigned to accept,



The man has now fairly the choice; to me  
that appears the intent  
Of the law; who it better conceives, may  
now let us hear what it is.

The verdict was pleasing to you, and all of  
your council as well;  
Reynard was eulogised much; you were  
thanked by the peasant; and all  
The wisdom of Reynard extolled; the queen  
also praised him herself.  
Much talk there was made at the time, how  
formerly you had, in war, 320  
Both Bruin and Isengrim used; and how, far  
and wide, they were feared,  
For always were they to be found where  
plenty there was to devour.  
Burly and daring and strong, none could  
deny that they were,  
Yet often in counsel was felt the lack of  
some much needed sense,  
For they are accustomed too much on phy-  
sical force to rely.



When work in the field is approached,  
much lameness and halting there is.  
Bolder can one not appear, than show they  
themselves when at home;  
Outside they are ready in ambush to lie;  
but, if once are exchanged  
Sturdy blows, they then will be found neither  
better nor worse than the next.  
The bears and the wolves destroy the  
whole land, and little they care 330  
Whose house is consumed by the flames.  
They ever accustom themselves  
To go and get warm at the coals, and  
pity for none do they feel,  
If only their maws they can fill. The eggs  
they all swallow themselves,  
And leave but the shells to the poor, and  
think such division is fair.  
On the other hand Reynard, the fox, and  
all of his race comprehend  
What wisdom and counsel imply; and, if  
now he has done something wrong,  
Gracious lord, yet is he no stick. Be sure  
that no other will you

Ever give any better advice. For this,  
grant him pardon, I beg.

To this then responded the king: Upon it  
I'll think. The decree  
Was given as you have described; the  
serpent the penalty paid. 340  
Yet remains he a scamp, every inch, without  
any chance to reform.  
If a compact with him should be made,  
deception at last will result,  
For in proving that black is but white,  
who is there can match him in skill?  
The wolf and the bear and the cat, the  
rabbit and even the crow,  
Are not for him agile enough, he brings  
them to shame and disgrace;  
From this one he snatches an ear, from  
another he tears out an eye,  
And a third he deprives of his life. I  
certainly cannot conceive  
How you can thus favor the scamp, and  
speak in defence of his acts.

Gracious lord, then responded the ape, it  
impossible is to deny  
That his race is exalted and great. There-  
on it is well to reflect. 350

Then up rose the king to go out, and all  
of those who were there,  
In a body awaiting him stood. In the  
circle thus formed he observed  
A number to Reynard most closely allied  
who all had arrived  
Their kinsman to shield and protect; so  
many to name would be hard.  
And he the great family saw; he then, on  
the other side, saw  
The enemies Reynard had made; divided it  
seemed was the court.

In this way the monarch began: Give ear  
to me, Reynard! Can you  
An excuse for such wickedness find, as, with  
Bellyn's assistance, to put

My innocent Lampen to death and, in your  
audacity, too,  
His head in the wallet to thrust, as if to  
me letters you sent? 360  
To mock me that deed you performed; I  
have punished already the one,  
The penalty Bellyn has paid, and you may  
the same now expect.

Ah, me! answered Reynard thereto; oh,  
would that I also were dead!  
Pray hearken to me, and then you can do  
as the case may demand.  
If guilty, then slay me at once; I shall  
never, however, get free  
From my burden of grief and distress; for-  
lorn I must always remain.  
For Bellyn the traitor's purloined the choic-  
est of treasures from me,  
The equal of which never yet has mortal  
his eyes set upon.  
Ah, life to poor Lampen they've cost!  
These treasures I had to them both

Committed in charge; now Bellyn has stolen  
the costly effects. 370

But let them yet further be sought; how-  
ever, I very much fear  
That none will e'er find them again; they'll  
rest for eternity lost.

To this did the monkey reply: Why give  
you thus way to despair?

Be they but on top of the ground, to  
recover them yet there is hope;

Both early and late will we go, and of  
laymen and clerics with zeal

Will enquire. But first let us know, of  
what did the treasures consist?

Reynard said: So precious they were, that  
ne'er can we find them again.

Who possesses them now will guard them  
with care. How much at the loss

Will my wife, dame Ermelyn, grieve! She  
will never forgive me for this,

For me she tried hard to dissuade from  
entrusting such riches to them. 380  
Now lies are against me trumped up, and  
I am most basely accused;  
But still I my rights will defend, and the  
issue await; and if then  
Acquitted I am, I will travel about through  
kingdoms and lands,  
And endeavor the treasures to find, even  
though it shall cost me my life. 384

## CANTO TEN

My king, furthermore said the fox, that  
villain so crafty in speech,  
Permit me, illustrious prince, in the ears of  
my friends to relate  
What comprised all the sumptuous things  
that I had transmitted to you;  
Though them you may not have received,  
yet laudable was my intent.  
Go ahead then, responded the king, and  
whatever you say, make it short.

Well-being and honor are lost! And every-  
thing now you shall learn,  
Said Reynard, with sadness of tone. The  
first of the beautiful gems  
Was a ring, which to Bellyn I gave, and  
he should the same to the king  
Have brought and surrendered from me.  
In a most unaccountable way  
This ring was designed and composed, and  
worthy it was in the wealth 10

Of my sovereign's treasure to shine, being  
made of the finest of gold.  
On the innermost side of this gem, that  
next to the finger would be,  
Were letters engraved to be seen, enamelled  
in blue and in black;  
Three Hebrew cognomens they formed, of  
significance special and great;  
And none in this land could explain what  
meaning lay hidden therein;  
Master Abrion only, of Treves, could decipher  
the symbols for me.  
Now he is an erudite Jew, and every language  
and tongue  
He knows, that is spoken by man from  
Lüneberg unto Poitou;  
And is also especially skilled in the virtues  
of herbs and of stones.

When placed I before him the ring, he said  
that most precious of things                      20  
Were hidden within its embrace; that the  
names, which therein were engraved,



Were carried by Seth, the devout, from  
Paradise down to the earth,  
When the oil of compassion he sought; and  
who on his finger it wears,  
Finds free from all dangers himself; not  
thunder nor lightning nor all  
The mage's enchantments can hurt, while  
this on his person he keeps.  
And further the master observed that, at  
some time or other, he'd read  
That who kept on his finger the ring, could  
not, in the fiercest of cold,  
Be frozen to death, but would certainly live  
to a peaceful old age.  
Outside it a gem had been set, a carbuncle  
brilliant and clear,  
Which glistened so brightly at night, that  
things could be seen as by day. 30  
Many virtues belonged to this stone: all  
kinds of diseases it healed;  
Who came into contact therewith, was  
exempt from all want and distress;  
Death was the only thing it had not the  
power to subdue.

Still further the master disclosed the magnificent gifts of the stone;  
Its owner in safety can go throughout all  
the lands of the earth;  
Neither water nor fire can him hurt; imprisoned, or even betrayed,  
He never can be, and from all the assaults  
of a foe he escapes.  
If, fasting, he looks on the stone, in battle  
he certainly will  
A hundred and more overcome; by the  
potency too of the stone,  
Is the action of poisons annulled, and  
malignant secretions as well. 40  
So also it hatred destroys; how many soever  
there be,  
Who do its possessor not love, they shortly  
a change undergo.

But who could enumerate all the virtues  
and powers of the stone,  
That I found in my father's reserve, and  
I, to my master, the king,

Now thought in all safety to send? For  
of such a magnificent ring  
I worthy was not; I knew it right well; it  
ought to belong,  
I thought, to the one who, of right, is held  
as the noblest of all.  
On him, and none other, depend our welfare  
and property both;  
And I cherished the hope that his life I  
might from all evil protect.

Moreover was Bellyn, the ram, in addition  
thereto, to the queen, 50  
A mirror and comb to present, to keep in  
remembrance of me.  
These both had I once, out of sport, from  
my father's collection removed,  
And not on the face of the earth could a  
work of art finer be found.  
How oft has endeavored my wife them both  
to obtain for herself!  
For nothing so much did she long, of all  
that there is in the world;

And about them contentions we had, but  
my purpose she never could change.  
At length both the mirror and comb, with  
best of intention, I sent  
To my gracious lady, the queen, who  
always and ever to me  
The utmost of favor has shown, and  
shielded from harm of all kinds.  
She often has spoken for me a mild and  
benevolent word; 60  
She is noble, exalted in birth, by virtue  
enrobed and adorned,  
And her ancient descent is proclaimed by  
actions as well as by words.  
She was worthy the mirror and comb, on  
which, to my sorrow and shame,  
She has not been allowed to set eyes. For  
ever, alas, they are lost!

Now to say a few words of the comb:  
The artist, this comb to construct,  
Had the bones of a panther employed, a  
glorious creature's remains,

Whose place of abode is the land from  
Paradise unto the Ind.  
All species of colors are shown in its skin,  
and the sweetest of scents  
Are thence given out, wherever it turns;  
and thus do the beasts  
Instinctively follow its tracks, wherever it  
be that it goes; 70  
For healthy they grow from this scent and,  
without an exception, they all  
Are imbued with a knowledge of this. Of  
sinews and bones such as these  
Was the beautiful comb, that I sent, constructed with wonderful skill;  
Like silver in whiteness and gleam, of  
ineffable purity too;  
And better, by far, was its scent than cin-  
namon even and cloves.  
When the animal passes from life, the aroma  
goes into its bones,  
Remains everlastingly there, and always them  
keeps from decay;  
It drives all distempers away, and against  
all the poisons is proof.

Again, on the back of the comb could  
excellent pictures be seen,  
Quite high in relief, with delicate tendrils of  
gold interlaced, 80  
And lazuli, azure and gules. In the middle-  
most part of the field  
Was the story insculptured with art, how  
Priam's son, Paris of Troy,  
Was sitting one day at a brook, and three  
women, seraphic and fair,  
Before him he saw, who Pallas and Juno  
and Venus were called.  
In strife they had long been engaged, for  
each of them wished to possess  
An apple that, up to this time, conjointly  
to them had belonged.  
At length an agreement was made, that  
Paris this apple of gold  
Should on the most lovely bestow, and she  
should alone it retain.

The youth regarded them all with the  
greatest attention and care.

Now Juno remarked: If the apple I get,  
and if me you adjudge 90  
The fairest to be, you the richest of all in  
the world shall become.

And Minerva rejoined: Deliberate well, and  
the apple give me;

Then you the most potent of men shall  
become, and dreaded by all

Wherever your name may be known, alike  
by your friends and your foes.

Venus spake: What want you with power?  
And riches, what good will they do?

Are you not the ransomed one's son? And  
as to your brothers, are they,

Hector and all of the rest, not wealthy and  
strong in the land?

Is Troy not secured by its hosts, and I  
also may ask if you have

Not conquered the land round about, as well  
as more far away folk?

If me you the fairest pronounce, and the  
apple confer upon me, 100

You then shall have cause to rejoice in a  
treasure the greatest on earth.

This prize is an excellent wife, of women  
the fairest of all,  
So virtuous, noble, and wise, that none can  
too highly her praise.  
Give the apple to me, and you shall the  
wife of the king of the Greeks,  
The beautiful Helen I mean, that treasure  
of treasures, possess.

Then gave he the apple to her, and  
adjudged her the fairest of all.  
And she aided him, in return, to elope with  
the beautiful queen,  
The great Menelaus's wife, whom he had  
in Troy for his own.  
This story was seen in relief, in the mid-  
dlemost part of the field;  
And all round about it were shields, with  
writings insculptured with art;      110  
And only had one them to read, the gist  
of the fable to know.

Of the mirror I further will speak; in  
lieu of a surface of glass,



A reflector of beryl was used, of wonderful  
beauty and sheen;  
All things thereupon were revealed, even  
though a mile off they occurred,  
Were it either by day or by night. And  
if, in one's face, there should be  
A blemish, whatever it was, if naught but a  
fleck in the eye,  
Should one in the mirror but look, from  
that very instant there fled  
Imperfections away of all kinds, and every  
extrinsic defect.  
Can you marvel that I am sore grieved at  
having the mirror thus lost?  
For setting the plate was employed the  
costliest wood to be found, 120  
Which shittim is called, so named from its  
solid and glittering growth;  
It is never infected by worms, and also, in  
justice, it is  
More highly regarded than gold, with ebony  
only as next.  
There once out of this was contrived, by an  
artist of skill and renown,

In the time of Krompardus the king, a  
horse of remarkable powers,  
Which its rider, in less than an hour, could  
take for a hundred good miles.  
I find it impossible now to tell all there is  
to be told,  
For not such a steed has been known, so  
long as the world has endured.

For the space of a foot and a half, entirely  
around, was the frame,  
Of the mirror embellished with work, all  
carved in the best style of art; 130  
And in letters of gold could be seen, under  
each of the pictures inscribed,  
The meaning and purport thereof; and I  
will these stories to you  
Concisely relate. The first was regarding  
the envious horse,  
Who thought that he would, for a bet,  
compete in a run with a stag,  
But was left far behind in the race, which  
gave him inordinate pain;

And a speedy occasion he took with a  
shepherd about it to talk.

He said: It shall profit you much, if me  
you will quickly obey;

If you mount, I will give you a ride; there  
has, but a short time ago,

A stag hid himself in the wood, and him  
you shall surely obtain;

His flesh and his antlers and skin you can  
sell at a very high price; 140

Get up, and we will him pursue. All  
right! I am ready to go,

Said the rustic, and sprang on his back.

They galloped away from the place,

And shortly got sight of the stag; then  
followed they on at full speed

In his track, and gave him pursuit. But  
the stag was the lighter of foot,

And the pace was too much for the horse,  
who finally said to the man:

Get down for a while, I am tired, and greatly  
have need of some rest.

No thank you, responded the man, you now  
will have me to obey,

And my spur you shall feel in your flank,  
for me you invited yourself  
To get on your back for a ride; and thus  
him the rider subdued.  
Lo! thus with much ill is repaid the one  
who doth others design 150  
To lead into harm; himself he but loads  
with evil and pain.

I now will still further explain what yet  
on the mirror was shown;  
How together an ass and a dog into  
service with Dives had gone.  
The dog had, without any doubt, the pet of  
his master become,  
For he sat at his table at meals, and par-  
took of the food that was served;  
And was also permitted to snuggle and rest  
in his guardian's lap,  
Who him was accustomed to feed with the  
finest of bread; in return,  
The dog was incessantly licking his master,  
and wagging his tail.

Now Baldwin observed the good luck of  
the dog and, grieving at heart,  
The donkey then said to himself: Oh,  
why does my master incline 160  
That indolent creature to treat in a way so  
excessively kind?  
Upon him the animal springs and licks him  
all over his beard,  
While I must the labor perform, and to  
carry the sacks am compelled.  
Just let him make trial but once, and see  
if, with five or with ten  
Dogs, as much in a year he can do, as I  
can get done in a month.  
Yet the best is provided for him, while I  
have to feed upon straw,  
And on the hard ground must repose; and,  
wherever it be that they drive  
Me or ride, I am scoffed at and mocked.  
I can, and I will, such abuse  
No longer endure; my master's affection I  
too will acquire.

Now just as he ended this speech, his  
master appeared in the street. 170  
The donkey erected his tail and kicked up  
his heels; with a spring  
At his master he leaped, braying and sing-  
ing and blaring with might;  
Licked his beard and displayed a desire, in  
the manner and way of a dog,  
To nestle up close to his cheeks, and  
bruised him somewhat with his kicks.  
In terror his master ran off, and cried:  
Oh, catch me the ass!  
Strike him dead! His servants then came,  
and thickly upon him fell blows.  
Him into his stable they drove, and there  
he a donkey remains.

There many are still to be met, of the  
selfsame assinine breed,  
Who the welfare of others begrudge, with-  
out doing good to themselves.  
However, should any such one to a state of  
great riches attain, 180

At once he resembles a pig, who should try  
to eat soup with a spoon;  
Not very much better, in truth. The  
donkey let carry the sacks,  
Have nothing but straw for his bed, and  
find among thistles his food.  
If one shall him otherwise treat, he will  
still ever be as of old.  
When an ass to dominion attains, it can  
meet with but little success;  
His welfare he seeks to advance, and what  
beyond this does he care?

My king, there is more you should know,  
and at the recital I beg  
That you take not offence; on the frame  
of the mirror could also be seen,  
Well fashioned and clearly described, how  
my father did, once on a time,  
Himself with our Tybert engage upon some  
adventures to go; 190  
And how they both sacredly swore that, in  
all kinds of danger, they would

One another with valor support, and all of  
their booty divide.

As forward they went on their way, they  
noticed some hunters and hounds,

Not very far off from the road; and Tybert,  
the cat, then remarked:

Good counsel seems costly to get! To  
this did my pater respond:

Though odd it may very well seem, yet  
with excellent counsel have I

My pocket already made full; and we must  
remember our oath,

Together to steadfastly hold; of all, most  
important is that.

On the other hand, Tybert replied: However  
the thing may turn out,

There remains yet a means to me known,  
and that I intend to employ. 200

And thus up a tree he with liveliness  
sprang, in order to save

Himself from the rage of the dogs; and  
thus he his uncle forsook.

In terror my father stood there, and the  
hunters were coming apace.



Quoth Tybert: Now, uncle, how goes it  
with you? Throw open the sack.

Of counsel it's full, make use of it now,  
for your time has arrived.

The huntsmen sounded their horns, and one  
to another they called;

My father then ran, so also the hounds;  
they followed with yelps,

And he sweated all over with fear, enriching  
the ground as he went.

He thus was relieved of some weight, and  
so he escaped from his foes.

Most basely, as you have just heard,  
deceived him his nearest of kin, 210

The one whom he trusted the most. His  
life in great jeopardy was,

For the dogs were swifter than he; and,  
had he not quickly bethought

Himself of a hole that he knew, he certainly  
would have been killed;

But he slipped himself nimbly within, and  
thus to his foes he was lost.

Many more of such fellows there are, as  
Tybert was then, to his shame,  
To my father so clearly revealed; how  
could I him honor and love?  
I have it half pardoned indeed, yet some-  
thing still rankles behind.  
This all on the mirror was carved, with  
pictures and writings thereon.

In addition to this was displayed an accu-  
rate scene of the wolf;  
Showing what kind of return for favors he's  
ready to give. 220  
He found in a meadow a horse, nothing of  
which but the bones  
Had been left; but ahungered he was, and  
greedily nibbled at these;  
Till a pointed one stuck in his throat, and  
askew in his gullet got fixed.  
A deplorable figure he cut; for him it had  
badly turned out.  
Runner on runner he sent, the surgeons to  
call to his aid;

But no one could give him relief, notwithstanding gigantic rewards

He offered to all who should try. The crane, in the end, was announced,

With the red-colored cap on his head, and him did the sick one implore:

Oh, doctor, relieve me at once of the fearful distress I am in;

If the bone you pull out of my throat, I will give you whatever you wish. 230

So trusted the crane in his words, that he pluckily stuck in his beak,

With his head, in the jaws of the wolf, and pulled out the bone.

Oh, dear! howled the wolf, how you hurt! you are doing me damage, I know.

Let it not happen again! For the present, I will it forgive.

Had it been any other than you, I would it not patiently bear.

Be tranquil, responded the crane, for now you again are quite well;

Give me the fee that I've earned; to you  
I have been of great help.

Now hark to the fool, said the wolf, 'tis I  
who have suffered the harm,

Yet he makes a claim for reward, forgetting  
the favor that I,

This instant, have granted to him. Have I  
not his noddle and beak, 240

Just now that I had in my mouth, released  
without doing him harm?

Has the hoyden not given me pain? I had  
very good reason indeed,

If reward is our subject of talk, to demand  
it myself in advance.

Thus knaves are accustomed to deal with  
those who them faithfully serve.

All graven with excellent skill, these stories,  
with others, adorned

The frame of the mirror all round, with  
many an ornament carved,

And many inscriptions in gold. Of the  
priceless jewel, myself

As unworthy I thought, too ignoble I am,  
and it therefore I sent  
To my sovereign lady, the queen. I was  
hopeful, by means such as this,  
To her and her consort, the king, myself  
reverential to show. 250  
My children were very much grieved, those  
two little well-mannered boys,  
When gave I the mirror away; to jump  
and to play they were used,  
In front of the glass, where liked they to  
look at themselves and their tails,  
Hanging below from their backs, and laughed  
at their own little mouths.  
Of the trustworthy Lampen, alas! I little  
expected the death,  
When I unto Bellyn and him the treasure,  
in fullness of faith,  
Without reservation consigned, for as honest  
I looked on them both;  
No better or worthier friends did I think  
that I ever could have.  
Let us woe on the murderer call! I've made  
up my mind to find out

Who has the treasures concealed; no slayer  
shall hidden remain. 260

More than one in this circle, perhaps, is  
able to give us the name

Of the spot where these riches were put,  
and tell us how Lampen was slain.

My beneficent king, I'm aware that daily  
before you are brought

So many important affairs, that you cannot  
remember them all.

Yet, haply, you still bear in mind the emi-  
nent service which he,

My father, once rendered to yours, in the  
place where at present I speak;

Your father lay sick unto death, and mine  
his life managed to save;

And yet you here freely assert that neither  
my father nor I

To you any good ever did. Be pleased me  
still further to hear;

And permit me, I beg, to relate how  
always, at your father's court, 270

Mine was at all times received with honor  
and dignity great,  
As a worthy physician of skill. The patient's  
condition he knew,  
With cleverness, how to inspect; and nature  
could always assist;  
And whatever was wrong, with eyes or  
aught else, he was able to heal.  
Well knew of emetics the gifts, and more-  
over did well understand  
All matters concerning the teeth, and the  
aching extracted with ease.  
I gladly imagine it's gone from your mind;  
that would cause no surprise,  
As you then were but three years of age.  
To his bed was your father confined,  
In winter, in exquisite pain, nigh greater  
than he could endure;  
And he of himself could not move. Then  
all the physicians he had 280  
Convoked between Rome and this place;  
and they, with unanimous voice,  
Had given him up as past aid. My father  
was summoned at last,

Who heard all about his distress, and the  
cause of his illness discerned.

My father lamented it much, and about it  
he said to the king:

Beneficent master and lord; I would risk,  
oh, how gladly, my life,

If yours, in this way, I could save. I wish  
that you me would permit

Your symptoms to test in a glass. His  
request was allowed by the king,

Who also complained that the longer they  
waited the worse he became.

On the mirror was brought into view, how  
now, by good fortune, at once,

Your father's distemper was cured. For  
mine with discretion remarked: 290

If health you desire to regain, determine,  
without loss of time,

From off a wolf's liver to dine; the wolf,  
however, must be

Full seven years old at the least, and the  
liver entire you must eat.





"If health you desire to regain, determine, without loss of time,  
From off a wolf's liver to dine."

You dare not refuse it to do, for your life  
is concerned in the act,  
The glass contains nothing but blood, so  
make up your mind with despatch.

With those round about was the wolf,  
whom this did no pleasure afford.

Your father now spoke in this wise: You  
all have heard what is required!

Now listen, sir Wolf! That I may get  
well, you will not, I am sure,

Your liver refuse to give up. To him then  
responded the wolf:

Not yet am I five years of age; what good  
will my liver effect? 300

Sheer nonsense, my father replied, we will  
not be obstructed by that;

I soon by your liver can tell. The wolf  
was commanded to take

His place in the kitchen below, and useful  
his liver was found.

Your father devoured it forthwith and, as  
soon as he swallowed it down,

Relieved from his sickness he was, and all  
other ailments as well.

My father profusely he thanked, and all at  
the court were compelled

Him as Doctor henceforth to address, and  
none should it ever forget.

My father was constantly now at the right  
of the king to be found.

To him did your father present, as I most  
reliably know,

Very shortly, a locket of gold, and also a  
crimson barette, 310

To wear before all of the lords; and thus,  
from that time until now,

Have all held him high in esteem. With  
his son, however, have things

Assumed an unfortunate change; his father's  
great virtues and gifts

In remembrance no longer are held. The  
most avaricious of knaves

Are advanced, and all thought is bestowed  
on advantage and gain;

Wisdom and justice are pushed to the rear,  
and our servants become  
Our most arrogant lords, while the poor, as  
a rule, must suffer for this.  
If such gets dominion and power, he strikes  
out blindly, all round,  
Among all the people he rules, and his  
birth he completely forgets;  
His profit he seeks to extract from every  
game that is played. 320  
Among the exalted we see not a few such  
as those I've described;  
To entreaty they never give ear, if donations  
are not to be found  
Profusely connected therewith; and, if they  
the people instruct,  
It means only pay, no matter the number  
of times, you must pay.

These covetous wolves ever seek the daintiest  
morsels to keep  
For themselves; and, had they the means,  
with even the smallest of loss,

The life of their master to save, about it  
they scruples would have.

His liver the wolf would not yield, not e'en  
to do good to the king!

A liver, indeed! I say it right out!

Twenty wolves, of a truth,  
Should be ready to sacrifice life, that the  
king and our idolized queen 330

Possession of theirs might retain; much  
smaller the damage would be.

If a seed be of potency void, what good  
can therefrom be derived?

The things that occurred in your youth,  
you cannot retrace in your mind;

But I can remember them well, as though  
they of yesterday were.

On the mirror the story was told, just as  
my father desired;

The work was embellished with gems, and  
garnished with tendrils of gold.

If I could the mirror but find, I would  
hazard possessions and life.



Reynard, the monarch observed, I have well  
    comprehended your speech,  
Have listened to every word of the stories  
    that you have rehearsed.

So great were your father at court, and had  
    he so many, forsooth, 340  
Commendable actions performed, that still  
    was in years long ago.

I remember them not in the least, and no  
    one has told me thereof;

Whereas the transactions of yours are con-  
    stantly brought to my ears;

You are ever at some kind of game, at  
    least so I hear it affirmed.

If injustice is done you in this, and all are  
    but fabulous yarns,

Some good I for once would fain learn;  
    not often to happen this seems.

My lord, answered Reynard thereto, I now  
    shall make bold, about this,

To explain myself fully to you; for the  
    matter me closely concerns.

Good service to you I have done; think  
not, I implore you, that I  
This cast in your teeth! God forbid! I  
know that in duty I'm bound 350  
To obey you so far as I can. One story,  
at least, you have not  
Let utterly slip from your mind: how, with  
Isengrim, I, by good luck,  
A grunter had once hunted down; it squealed,  
and we bit it to death;  
You came, making bitter complaint, and said  
that your consort as well  
Was coming, a short way behind; if some  
one would only divide  
With you a small portion of food, of help  
it would be to you both.  
Give us whereof you have caught, was the  
claim that you made of us then.  
And Isengrim said, indeed, yes; yet mut-  
tered he under his beard,  
So that one could him scarce understand.  
But I, on the contrary, said:  
My lord, I would grudge you it not, though  
herds of swine were concerned. 360



Say, who is the one to divide? The wolf,  
you responded again.

Now Isengrim greatly rejoiced, and according  
to habit, he shared

Without any shyness or shame, and gave  
but a quarter to you,

And your consort a piece of like size, while  
he set to work on the half.

This greedily swallowed he down and, out-  
side the two skinny ears,

He offered me nought but the snout and  
just about half of the lights;

He kept all the rest for himself, and all  
the transaction you saw.

Little chivalry showed he us there; my  
king, you know it quite well!

Your portion you quickly devoured, yet I  
noticed, however, that you

Had your hunger not fully assuaged; though  
Isengrim would it not see, 370

But his gnawing and chewing kept up, and  
offered you nothing at all.

But then you inflicted a blow so hard with  
your claws on his ears,

That some of his hide was torn off; and  
then, with his bloody bald pate,  
He ran from the place with bumps on his  
head, and howled with the pain.  
And you to the cormorant called: Come  
back, and learn to be shamed!  
When next you divide, deal better with  
me, or I'll know what it means.  
Now make yourself off with all speed, and  
bring something further to eat.  
Sire, order you that? I replied, then fol-  
low him will I at once,  
And I know that I something can fetch;  
and you were contented with this.  
Most doltishly then did Isengrim act; he  
bled and he groaned 380  
And murmured to me; yet urged I him on,  
and together we chased  
And caught a young calf, you are fond of  
the food, and when we it brought,  
It proved to be fat; at it heartily laughing,  
you said in my praise  
Full many an affable word; I should be,  
you imagined, first-rate

To send out at the time of one's need, and  
likewise, still further you said:  
Apportion the calf! Then quoth I: One  
half is already your own,  
And a half belongs to the queen; what  
inside the carcase is found,  
As heart, and liver, and lights, belongs, as  
in reason it should,  
To your children; the feet I will take,  
which to nibble I very much like;  
And the head may be kept by the wolf, the  
savory meat that it is. 390

The gist of these words having got, you  
answered: Who, pray, has you taught  
To allot in so courtly a way? That, I  
should like to find out.

I answered: My teacher is near; this scamp,  
with the red-colored head,  
And bloody bald pate, has himself the intel-  
ligence opened to me.

I exactly observed what he did, when the  
porker this morning he carved;

Then learnt I the meaning to seize, of such  
a division as that;  
Veal or pork matters not, I shall now find  
it easy and make no mistake.

With shame and disgrace were the wolf  
and his greed overwhelmed.  
Of his like are enough to be found! They  
swallow the plentiful fruits  
Of all the estates in the land, as well as  
the vassals thereof. 400  
All, indeed, that is good they destroy, and  
not the least spark of remorse  
Can any one ever expect, and woe to the  
land where they dwell.

Take notice, my master and king, thus oft  
you in honor I've held.  
All I at this moment possess, or may in  
the future obtain,  
I gladly devote to your use, and that of  
your consort, the queen;

Be it little or ever so much, the most of  
it all you shall take.

If you think of the calf and the pig, you  
will see, without shadow of doubt,

Where faithful allegiance resides. Would  
Isengrim, any way, dare

With Reynard to measure himself? But  
still, to our sorrow, the wolf

As chief of your stewards is held, and  
harasses every one. 410

Not much for your profit cares he; but  
well he knows how the whole way,

In promoting his own, to proceed. Thus  
now he with Bruin, indeed,

Has your majesty's ear, and what Reynard  
may say is but little esteemed.

My liege, it is true that I'm under a cloud,  
but I will not give way,

For through with it now I must go; and  
therefore permit me to say:

If any one thinks he has proofs, let him  
now with his witnesses come,

Himself to the subject confine, and judicially  
pledge, on a bond,  
His goods, or his ear, or his life, in case  
it may be that he lose;  
And I will pledge mine against his. Thus  
has it been valid in law,  
From time out of mind; thus let it be  
now, and the whole of the case, 420  
As argued both for and against, in just  
such a manner can be,  
In honor, conducted and judged. This now  
I make bold to demand.

However it be, responded the king, from  
justice's path  
I can, and I will, not detract; that is some-  
thing I've never endured.  
Of a truth, the suspicion is strong, that  
particeps criminis you  
In the murder of Lampen became, that  
messenger faithful whom I  
So much loved, and whose loss I deplore;  
grieved beyond measure I was

When drawn was his blood-covered head  
from the wallet I'd given to you;  
Bellyn atoned on the spot, that wicked  
attendant and base;  
You now may, however, the case still fur-  
ther defend at the bar. 430  
In what I myself am concerned, I Reynard  
all freely forgive;  
For he firmly has stood at my side in  
many a critical case.  
Has any one further complaint, we are  
ready to hear what it is;  
Let him trustworthy witnesses bring, and  
prosecute all of his claims  
Against Reynard in order and form; here,  
awaiting your charges, he stands.

Most gracious my lord! Reynard said, I  
give you my heartiest thanks.  
To each you give ear and dispense the  
benefits all of the law.  
Let me now with solemnity say, with what  
a disconsolate heart

I Bellyn and Lampen dismissed; I had a  
foreboding, I think,  
Of what was to happen to both; with  
tenderness loved I them well. 440

Thus Reynard's narration and words were  
garnished with skill so adroit,  
That all were enforced to believe; he the  
treasures so neatly described,  
And conducted so gravely himself, that  
truth to be speaking he seemed;  
And to comfort him even they tried. And  
thus he deluded the king,  
Who much with the riches was pleased, and  
gladly would them have possessed.  
To Reynard he said: Be content, you  
shall go on a journey and try,  
Far and wide, to discover the lost, so all  
that is possible do.  
If need you may have of my help, it will  
at your service be found.



Said Reynard in answer to this: Your  
goodness I gratefully feel;

These words are a comfort to me, and rea-  
son they give me to hope. 450

To punish foul murder and theft is the  
highest of rights you possess.

The matter to me is obscure, yet clear as  
the day shall become.

With care will I after it look, and travel  
by day and by night,

Without any thought of repose, and question  
all people I see.

If I learn where the goods can be found,  
and them am not able again

To get in my hands, for lack of due  
strength, for aid I shall ask,

Which you to me then will vouchsafe, and  
the matter will surely succeed.

If the treasures to you I safely restore, I  
shall find at the last

My trouble requited in full, and my loyalty  
proved beyond doubt.

The king with enjoyment this heard; and,  
without reservation, he gave 460  
Assent to what Reynard had said, who had  
woven his lies with such art  
That the rest all believed him as well; he  
now had permission, once more,  
To go and to come he as pleased, and that  
without question or check.

Lost Isengrim now all control of himself,  
and, gnashing his teeth,  
He said: Gracious lord, you mean thus  
again to put trust in the thief,  
Who you two and threefold befooled? Who  
can help being struck with surprise?  
See you not that the scamp you deceives,  
and damage to all of us does?  
He never gives voice to the truth, and  
nothing devises but lies.  
But I, with such ease, will not let him  
off! You ought to know well  
That he is a rascal and false. I know of  
three capital crimes 470

Committed by him; get off shall he not,  
even though we must fight.

We are witnesses told to produce, what  
good would it do if we did?

If they came and their evidence gave, for  
the sitting entire of the court,

Would that be of any effect? He still  
would do just as he pleased.

Very oft can no witness be had, ought the  
scallawag then to go on

Committing his crimes as before? Who  
would venture to go on the stand?

Some stigma he fastens on each, and each  
from such injury shrinks;

You and yours it experience too, and in  
the same boat are we all.

Today I will keep him in hand, he  
neither shall waver nor skulk;

But shall answer to me for his deeds, so  
now let him be on his guard. 480

## CANTO ELEVEN

His charges brought Isengrim forth, and said:  
Pray attend while I speak!  
Reynard, most gracious of kings, the villain  
that ever he was,  
Remains to the present unchanged; on  
infamous things he dilates,  
My kindred and me to disgrace; and thus  
has he ever for me,  
And even more still for my wife, caused  
nigh unendurable shame.  
He tempted her, once on a time, to wade  
through a marsh to a pond,  
By making her firmly believe that, every  
day she was there,  
Great numbers of fish she could catch. If  
she in the water should put  
Her tail, and allow it to hang, then sure  
would the fish be to bite  
So well that, if four of them tried, not all  
to be got could they eat. 10  
She went upon this on her way, and found  
herself swimming, at last,

Toward the sluice-end of the pond, where  
deeper the water was massed,  
And there he induced her to let her tail  
in the water hang down.  
The cold towards eve was intense, and  
to freeze so hard it began,  
That longer she scarce could hold out; and  
thus, very shortly, her tail  
Had frozen become in the ice, so fast that  
she could not it raise;  
And heavy, she thought, were the fish, that  
she had thus managed to catch.  
Reynard, the dastardly thief, observed this,  
and then what he did  
I can trust not myself to disclose; he had  
her, alas, at his will.  
He shall not escape from us now! His  
villainous conduct shall cost                20  
One of us two, as you'll see, his life before  
close of the day.  
This time shall his tongue not prevail; I  
caught him, indeed, in the act,  
As I was, by accident, led to the top  
of a hillock near by.

I heard her call loudly for help, the poor  
cheated thing that she was;  
Fast in the ice she was caught, and  
him was not able to check;  
And I, coming there, was compelled the  
whole of his doings to see;  
In truth, an amazement it is that my heart  
was not broken thereat.  
Reynard, I cried in dismay, what, in God's  
name, are you at?  
He heard me and fled on his way. I came  
with a sorrowful heart,  
Was driven to shiver and wade in the cold,  
frozen water, and could 30  
The ice but with trouble break up, in order  
my wife to release.  
Alas! we prospered not well; she tugged  
with the whole of her might,  
And a quarter, at least, of her tail remained  
firmly held by the ice.  
Long and aloud she bemoaned; the peasants,  
at hearing the noise,  
Rushed forward and came on our track, and  
one to another they called.

They hotly ran over the dam, with axes and  
pikes in their hands;

With distaff the women came too, all making  
a terrible din;

Catch them, they all of them cried, and  
give them a taste of your clubs.

I never had felt so affrighted as then, and  
the same was confessed

By Greedimund too; we found it hard work  
to get off with our lives, 40

By running till skin fairly smoked. Then  
rushing along came a scamp,

A devilish fellow he was, and armed with  
a long, wicked pike,

And light on his feet, who after us  
stabbed, and pressed us quite hard.

If night had not come to our aid, our lives  
we had certainly lost.

The women still kept up their cry, the  
vixenish beldams, that we

Some of their sheep had devoured. Fain  
had they added their blows

To the horrible insults they cast; our foot-  
steps, however, we turned

From land to the water again; and, quick  
as the lightning, we slipped  
Back into the rushes at hand, where dared  
not the clowns to pursue;  
For now it quite dark had become, so back  
they returned to their homes. 50  
We hardly escaped as it was. You see,  
gracious king, in this case,  
Treason and murder and rape; of infamous  
crimes such as these  
The question is now, and these you will  
punish severely, my king.

When the king this arraignment had heard,  
he said: A case such as this  
Shall be by us righteously judged; let Reynard  
thereover be heard.  
Reynard spake: If it were as described,  
then certainly would the affair  
Not much to my honor redound; but God,  
in his mercy, forbid  
That facts should be found as set forth; I  
will not, however, deny



That fish I have taught her to catch, and  
also have showed her the path

That best to the pond would conduct, and  
her to the water would take; 60

But on she so greedily ran, so soon as I  
spoke of the fish,

That both moderation and road, and instruc-  
tion as well, she forgot.

If she in the ice was held fast, then had  
she, without any doubt,

Been sitting too long at her post, for if  
she had pulled in good time,

Enough she of fish would have caught to  
serve for a dainty repast.

Desire in too high a degree is always  
malign. When the heart

To dissatisfaction inclines, it always must  
miss very much.

Who harbors the spirit of greed, has life  
with anxiety filled,

For no one can give him enough. This  
lesson dame Greedimund learned,

When frozen she got in the ice. Poor  
thanks for my trouble she gives; 70

But this consolation I have, that help her  
I honestly did,  
And pushed with the whole of my strength,  
in trying her safely to lift.  
But she was too heavy a weight; and,  
while I was doing my best,  
Isengrim chanced to draw near, in walking  
along by the shore.  
There, standing above, he called out and,  
horribly cursing, came down.  
Yes, I was in truth much alarmed, his  
beautiful blessings to hear;  
Not once, but e'en twice and three times,  
his terrible curses he flung  
At me there; and to scream he began,  
urged on by a fury so wild,  
That I thought: You had better be off,  
and not any longer wait here;  
Far better to fly than be flayed. The nail  
on its head I had hit, 80  
For he would me to pieces have torn.  
Whenever two dogs shall begin  
To fight with themselves for a bone, with  
absolute certainty must

The one or the other it lose. Thus seemed  
it to me for the best  
To scamper away from his wrath and utter  
confusion of mind.  
That ferocious he was and remains, how  
can he deny? Only ask  
Of his wife; for I will have nothing to say  
to a liar like him.  
So soon as he fastened his eyes on his  
wife, frozen fast in the ice,  
He viciously swore and reviled, and came  
and assisted her out.  
If the peasants made after them then, it  
certainly was for their good,  
For thus got in motion their blood, and  
cold they no longer could feel. 90  
Now what is there further to say? It  
mean and contemptible is  
For him to dishonor his wife with lies such  
as these which he tells.  
Herself you can ask, she is here; and, if  
what he says is the truth,  
Would surely not fail to complain. Mean-  
while I beg humbly to ask

That the case be continued a week, in order  
my friends to consult,  
As to what kind of answer is due to the  
wolf and this charge that he brings.

Greedimund thereupon said: In all of your  
actions and thoughts  
Can nothing be found, as we know, but  
roguery, falsehood, and fraud,  
Villainy, intrigue, and spite. Who your  
cavilling words shall believe  
Will surely be damaged at last; you always  
take care to employ 100  
Confused and inconsequent words. I found  
it like this at the well.  
Two buckets were hanging therein; in one  
you had stationed yourself,  
For what I have never found out, and down  
to the bottom had gone;  
And, finding unable yourself to get again  
back to the top,  
You blackened the air with your groans.  
By morning I came to the well,

And asked: Who put you down there?

You answered: You just in the nick  
Of time, dear gossip, have come! I yield  
to you all of my gains;

Get into the bucket up there and down  
you will come, and may eat

Down here all the fish you can want. At  
an ill-fated moment I went,

For you I believed, when you said you had  
eaten such numbers of fish, 110

That a pain in your belly you had. I suffered  
myself to be fooled,

And stupidly got in the pail, which quickly  
began to go down,

While the other began to go up, till opposite  
me you arrived.

To me it quite wonderful seemed, and I,  
in perplexity, asked:

How chanced it to come about thus? In  
answer to me you replied:

Up and down, so it goes in the world, and  
so goes it now with us two;

The course of things ever is thus, while  
some must abasement endure,

Are others exalted in turn, in accord with  
the virtues of each.

Then out of the bucket you jumped and,  
fast as you could, ran away.

But, grieving, I sat in the well, and all  
the day long was compelled 120

Therein to abide; and blows without num-  
ber, at eve, to endure,

Before I made good my escape. Some  
peasants then came to the well,

And spied me down there in the pail, as  
I, with grim hunger annoyed,

Was sitting in sorrow and fear, and feeling  
completely undone.

The peasants among themselves said: Now  
see! Down below in the pail

Is sitting, at present, the foe that lessens  
our number of sheep.

Haul him up, then one of them cried; my-  
self I in readiness hold

To greet him up here at the edge, and he  
for our lambs shall now pay.

But the kind of a greeting I got! That  
pitiful was, for there fell

Blow after blow on my hide. Not once, in  
the whole of my life, 130  
Had I a more sorrowful day, and scarce  
came I off with my life.

In answer to this, Reynard said: The sequel  
more closely regard,  
And you will assuredly find how healthful  
that whipping has been;  
Although, with respect to myself, I prefer  
to dispense with the like.  
As then was the state of the case, was one  
or the other compelled  
To burden himself with the blows, for both  
of us could not escape.  
It will aid you to bear this in mind; for  
then, in a similar case,  
You none will so easily trust. The world  
is brim full of deceit.

Indeed, retorted the wolf, what evidence  
more do we need?

No one has damaged me more than this  
rascally, treacherous scamp. 140  
One matter not yet have I told: how he,  
out in Saxony once,  
In the midst of the tribe of the apes, me  
led into shame and disgrace.  
He there, on some pretext, induced me into  
a pit to descend,  
Knowing quite well in advance that mischief  
on me it would bring.  
If I had not quickly run off, my sight and  
my hearing would there  
Have been lost. Before I went in he had  
said, with plausible words,  
His aunt I should find in the place, mean-  
ing by that the she-ape.  
It irked him to see me escape, for he sent  
me, with malice prepense,  
Down into that horrible nest; I thought I  
had got into hell.

Said Reynard in answer thereto, before all  
the lords of the court: 150



The wolf most distractedly talks, not quite  
in his senses he seems;

If he of the ape would report, he plainly  
should say what he means.

Two years and a half have gone by, since  
into the Saxon confines

He led with carousal the way, and I thither  
went in pursuit.

That is true; the rest is a lie. An ape was  
there not in the place.

He is talking about some baboons; and,  
never at all, will I them

Acknowledge as kinsmen of mine. But  
Martin the ape and his wife,

Dame Rückenau, relatives are; I both as  
my cousins respect,

And of the connection am proud. The  
life of a jurist he leads,

And knows the whole law like a book.

But as to those creatures of whom 160  
Now Isengrim talks, he treats me with  
scorn. With them, let me say,

I have nothing whatever to do, they never  
were kinsmen of mine.

They resemble the devil in hell, and if the  
old lady I called  
My aunt, at the time in dispute, I did it  
with prudent intent;  
And nothing thereby did I lose, this much  
I will readily own;  
She treated me well as her guest; or else  
might she well have been choked.

Behold you, my lords, we had gone a little  
aside from the road,  
And round to the back of a hill, where we  
came on a cavernous pit,  
Deep and gloomy and long. Now here, as  
accustomed he is,  
With hunger felt Isengrim ill. Whenever  
has he, of a truth, 170  
Been seen with his stomach so full, that he  
has contented appeared?  
And then, unto him I observed: Down  
here, in this cave, may be found,  
No doubt, food enough and to spare; and,  
doubtless, its inmates with us

Will gladly divide what they have; we  
come at an opportune time.  
But Isengrim said in response: My uncle, I  
much would prefer  
To wait for you under this tree, for you  
are, by far, the more apt  
At making acquaintances new; and if food  
be extended to you,  
Let me be informed. The villain thus  
thought that he would, at my risk,  
The outcome await where he was. There-  
upon I directed my steps  
Down into the cavernous hole; and, shudder-  
ing, wandered I through 180  
The lengthy and crooked approach, which  
seemed as if never to end.  
But that which I came upon then! Such  
fright would I not undergo,  
Twice in the course of my life, for a pile  
of the ruddiest gold.  
Such a nestful of horrible beasts, the  
large intermixed with the small!  
The mother, indeed, of the brood I took for  
the devil himself.

Capacious and broad was her mouth, with  
its big and detestable teeth;  
Big claws on her hands and her feet, with  
long and most hideous tail  
Set behind at the end of her back; a thing  
so atrocious have I  
Not seen, in the whole of my life. The  
tawny, disgusting young cubs  
Were all most remarkably formed, like nothing but horrible spooks. 190  
Upon me she grewsofely gazed; I wished  
I was anywhere else.  
She bigger than Isengrim was, and some of  
her cubs were, indeed,  
Her equal in stature almost. Imbedded in  
festering hay,  
I came on the sickening brood, all over and  
over besmeared  
With mire up as far as their ears; while  
the stink that polluted the den  
Was worse than the brimstone of hell.  
To tell you the truth unadorned,  
But little I liked it in there; for of them  
such a number there was,

While I was entirely alone; and dreadful  
grimaces they made.

I gathered my scattering thoughts, and  
sought for a way of retreat,

But greeted them well—though this was a  
sham—and friendly behaved, 200

As if an acquaintance I was. As aunt I  
the mother addressed,

And cousins the children I called, and bashful  
was not in my speech.

May God in his mercy you spare to a long  
and a prosperous life!

Are all these dear little ones yours? But  
really, I need not have asked.

How pleasant to see them it is. Good  
heavens! how brim full of life,

And thoroughly handsome they are. For  
sons of the king they would pass.

I give you, a thousand times, joy, that  
you, with descendants of worth,

Thus are augmenting our race; I rejoice  
beyond measure thereat.

I think myself now in good luck, to know  
of such kinsmen as these;

In critical times it may be, that kindred  
some help can supply. 210

When honor so great I bestowed, although  
I in earnest was not,  
She showed me, on her part, the same, and  
me as her uncle addressed,  
And like a relation behaved; little indeed  
as the crone  
Is any connection of mine. Yet not for  
this once could it do  
Any harm to address her as aunt. Mean-  
while, I was covered with sweat,  
All over and over, through fright; and yet  
she most affably said:  
Reynard, dear kinsman and friend, most  
heartily welcome you are;  
I earnestly hope you are well. To you, my  
whole life, I shall feel  
Obliged for this visit of yours; henceforth,  
you can rational thoughts  
To the minds of my children impart, that  
they may to honor attain. 220

Such was her manner of talk; and this, in  
a very few words,  
By calling her aunt and sparing the truth,  
I richly deserved.  
I still had an earnest desire to get once  
again to the air,  
But allow me to go she would not, and  
said: You, uncle, must not,  
Without some refreshment, depart. Remain  
till some food you have had.  
And she brought me a plenty to eat; I  
could not at present recall  
The names of the dishes she set; amazed to  
the utmost I was  
As to how she had come by it all. I  
feasted on venison and fish  
And other most relishing game; the whole  
of it just to my taste.  
When all I could eat I had had, then forward  
she furthermore brought 230  
A hunk from a stag she had got, and  
wished me to carry it home,  
For my wife and my children to eat; and  
I took an affectionate leave.

Reynard, she said once again, I hope you  
will visit me oft.

I promised her all that she wished, and  
managed to get from the place.

Inside so unpleasant it was, as well for the  
eyes as the nose,

That I was near dying while there; tried  
all I knew how to get out;

The passage ran nimbly along, till the open-  
ing I reached at the tree,

And groaning found Isengrim there. How  
are you, dear uncle? I said.

Quoth he: I am not at all well, with  
hunger I soon shall be dead.

I him, out of sympathy, gave the delicate  
collop of roast, 240

That with me away I had brought. He  
this with voracity ate,

And thanked me again and again; but he  
has forgotten it now.

When finished he was, he began: Now  
let me know all about those,

Who make in the cavern their home. How  
did you find things within?



Good or bad? And I told him the truth,  
and nought but the truth;  
Exactly apprized him of all. The nest was  
atrocious, but still,  
Therein was much delicate food. So soon  
as he felt a desire  
His share of the same to receive, his  
entrance he boldly could make;  
But he, above all, must avoid saying out  
what exactly he thought.  
If things you would have as you wish, be  
careful to husband the truth! 250  
I repeated it several times, for if it one  
foolishly has,  
For ever, at tip of the tongue, oppression  
he everywhere finds;  
He stands, in all places, behind, and others  
are called to the front.  
In this way I bade him depart, and told  
him, let happen what might,  
That he must be careful to say what each  
was desirous to hear,  
And he then would be kindly received.  
These were exactly the words,

Most noble monarch and lord, that conscience  
impelled me to say.

But he just the contrary did; and, if he  
got punished for that,

Then let him the punishment bear; he  
should listen to what he is told.

In truth, are his shaggy locks gray, yet  
wisdom beneath would be sought, 260

Without any chance of success. Such fellows  
but little esteem

Good sense or ingenuous thoughts; the  
worth of all wisdom is kept,

From gawky and blunt-witted folk, for ever  
and always concealed.

I faithfully on him enjoined, this once to  
be frugal of truth.

I know what is proper myself, he proudly  
responded to that;

And trotted thus into the hole, and well  
for his trouble got paid.

Behind sat the horrible wife, he] thought it  
was Satan himself,

That before him he saw. Moreover, the  
cubs! Now, bewildered, he cried:

Oh, heavens! What horrible beasts! Are  
these little wretches your whelps?

They have the appearance, indeed, of a  
hellish young rabble of fiends; 270

To drown them would be the best thing,  
so that the brood may itself

Not spread abroad over the earth. If  
mine they should happen to be,

I would strangle them every one. With  
them for a bait could be caught

Young devils, in numbers, with ease; in a  
bog one would only require

To fasten them well to the reeds, the  
odious, villainous brutes;

Marsh-monkeys they ought to be called, the  
name would exactly them fit.

With haste did the mother reply, and  
uttered some violent words:

What demon has sent us this guest? Who  
you has invited to come,

And greet us uncouthly like this? And  
what with my children have you,  
Good-looking or ugly, to do? Just now has  
departed from us 280  
That learned man, Reynard the fox, who  
very well knows what he means;  
And he did my children affirm, without  
deviation, to be  
Handsome, well-mannered, and good; he was  
perfectly ready and glad  
To recognize them as of kin. Not more  
than an hour has gone by  
Since he, standing here in this place, us all  
gave assurance of that.  
If please you as him they do not, why  
then I must tell you, in truth,  
That no one has asked you to come. Pray,  
understand, Isengrim, that.

At this he demanded of her, that dinner at  
once she provide;  
And said: Fetch it here, or I will it help  
you to find. I desire

No words any further to hear. And then  
he attempted, by force, 290  
To confiscate some of her stores; a thing  
that was badly advised.  
She threw herself on him forthwith, and  
bit him and savagely scratched  
His skin with her hideous nails, and vi-  
ciously tore him and clawed.  
Her children did also the same, they terribly  
champed him and rent;  
Then cried he blue murder and howled, his  
cheeks covered over with blood;  
Himself he tried not to defend, but ran with  
quick strides to get out.  
Wickedly bitten, I saw him emerge, all torn  
and in tatters his skin;  
Split open was one of his ears, and blood  
freely flowed from his nose;  
They'd nipped him with many a wound, and  
also his pelt had contrived  
To cram all together with filth. I asked,  
as he trod from the place: 300  
The truth have you spoken to her? And  
thus he replied to my words:

I said to her just what I thought, and  
then did the wretched old shrew  
Me badly disfigure and lame; I would I  
could meet her outside,  
She then should pay dear for it all. How,  
Reynard, appears it to you?  
Did you ever set eyes on such whelps? So  
horribly filthy and vile?  
No sooner I spoke, than it all came about;  
and as I, in her eyes,  
No more any favor could find, very badly  
I fared in the hole.

Are you crazy? I answered thereto; I cau-  
tioned you well against this.  
I do you most heartily greet, is the proper  
thing to have said.  
Pray how, my dear aunt, do you do? I  
would also ask after the health 310  
Of those pretty children of yours. I am  
glad both my little and big  
Young cousins once more to behold. But  
Isengrim said in reply:

That woman accost as my aunt? And  
cousins, those hideous brats?  
The devil may take the whole lot! Such  
kinsmen a horror would be.  
Oh, faugh! Such a damnable herd! I  
never will see them again.  
For this was he paid with such coin. Your  
judgment now render, oh king!  
With justice can he now affirm that by me  
he was tricked? Let him state  
If the matter did not come about, as I have  
this instant explained.

Then Isengrim firmly replied: We shall  
not, I can readily see,  
Determine this contest with words. From  
chiding what good do we get? 320  
Right is right, and wherever it dwells,  
itself it will show in the end.  
You, Reynard, now boldly step forth, if  
you think its abode is with you.  
We now with each other will fight, and  
then we shall know where it is.

So much you have found to report, as to  
how, in the den of the apes,  
The torments of hunger I bore, and you  
me so faithfully fed;  
Though how, I can't possibly think. It was  
only a bit of a bone  
That you brought; most likely the meat you  
had eaten already yourself.  
You stand there and ridicule me, and boldly  
you talk in a way  
That closely my honor affects. And you,  
with most scandalous lies,  
On me a suspicion have cast, of having a  
dastardly plot 330  
To injure the king had in mind; and hav-  
ing conceived the desire  
Of putting an end to his life; no scruples,  
however, have you  
In bragging of treasures to him, which he  
would be troubled to find.  
You shamefully treated my wife, and that  
you will have to atone.  
These things I now lay at your door, with  
a firm resolution to fight,



Concerning the old and the new; and this  
I say over: That you  
Are a murderer, traitor, and thief; and  
now, setting life against life,  
We in combat will settle the thing, and  
chiding and scolding will end.  
I tender my gauntlet to you, as always  
sufficient in law,  
From every challenger, is. You may it  
retain as a gage, 340  
And soon can our meeting be had. Our  
monarch my challenge has heard,  
And all of his barons as well; and they,  
I most earnestly hope,  
This battle for right will attend. Not a  
chance shall you have to escape,  
Till the matter is finally closed; and then  
we shall see what is what.

Reynard now thought to himself: At risk  
are possessions and life!  
He is big and but little am I, and this  
time should matters with me,

In any way, take a wrong turn, then all  
my devices and tricks  
Of but little avail will have been; yet let  
us await the event.  
I think some advantage I have; for lately  
he lost his front paws.  
If cooler the fool does not get, he surely  
shall not, in the end, 350  
His way in the matter obtain, let the cost  
be whatever it may.

And then, Reynard said to the wolf: It  
possible, Isengrim, is  
That you are a traitor to me; and all of  
the sundry complaints,  
You are thinking to bring against me, are  
made up entirely of lies.  
If combat you wish, I will risk it with  
you, and never shall flinch.  
I long] such a thing have desired, and here  
is my glove in exchange.

The monarch the pledges received, and both  
did them boldly present.

At the end of this function, he said: You  
each must security give,  
That tomorrow you fight without fail. Both  
of the parties, I think,  
Are sadly confused in their minds, I nothing  
can make of their talk. 360  
In an instant, as Isengrim's bail, came forward  
the bear and the cat;  
And then, upon Reynard's behalf, as vouchers  
presented themselves  
A son of old Martin, the ape, with Grim-  
bart, the badger, conjoined.

At this, dame Rückenau said: You, Reynard,  
must keep yourself calm,  
You need all the senses you have. My  
husband, who now is in Rome,  
Your uncle, once taught me a prayer, the  
subject of which was composed  
By the abbot of Bolton himself; and he to  
my consort it gave,  
To whom he was kindly disposed, on a  
small scrap of paper transcribed.

This prayer, so the abbot maintained, has  
very great virtue for those  
About to engage in a fight; one, fasting,  
must read it at morn, 370  
And then shall one daily remain insured  
against danger and want,  
And fully exempted from death, as well as  
from wounds and from pain.  
Take comfort, my nephew in this: that I,  
in the morning betimes,  
Will it over you read, that hope you may  
have, and freedom from fear.  
Dear aunt, then responded the fox, I return  
you my heartiest thanks;  
I shall always be mindful of this. Yet  
help I must ever expect,  
Most, from the right of my cause and the  
skill I can bring into play.

Together abode Reynard's friends the whole  
of the night, and dispelled  
His cares with hilarious talk. But anxious  
dame Rückenau was,

And busy with all he might need. With  
alacrity had she him shorn, 380  
From head to the tip of his tail, as well  
as his belly and breast;  
And covered with fat and with oil; and then  
it was made to appear  
That Reynard was fat and rotund, and very  
well set on his legs.  
Take heed, in addition she said, and con-  
sider what you have to do.  
Hark well to intelligent friends, for that  
will avail you the most;  
Drink well, and retain what you drink; and  
to the arena be sure,  
In the morning, as prudent, to come; then  
see that you moisten your brush  
All over and over till soaked, and try your  
opponent to hit.  
If you manage his eyes to anoint, 'twill be  
the best thing you can do,  
For his sight will be clouded at once; and  
that will be useful to you, 390  
While him it will greatly impede. At first  
you must fearful appear,

And at once, in the teeth of the wind, as  
fast as you can, run away.  
If he should give chase, then stir up the  
dust, in order his eyes  
To close with excretion and sand. Then  
spring to one side, and yourself  
Adapt to his every move; and, while he is  
wiping his eyes,  
Improve the advantage obtained, and thor-  
oughly sprinkle those eyes  
With your aqua fortis again, till totally  
blind he becomes,  
And longer knows not where he is, then  
yours shall the victory be.  
Dear nephew, just sleep now a bit, and we  
will you surely awake  
When the requisite time has arrived. And  
now I will over you read 400  
The sanctified words I described, that braced  
you may be by their aid.  
Her hand on his head she imposed, and  
recited the words that she had,  
From Martin, her husband, received, as  
stated above. Then she said:

Good luck you attend! You now are  
secure! The same were then said  
By Grimbart, his uncle, as well; then led  
they him off to his bed,  
And he peaceably slept. At rise of the  
sun, the otter arrived,  
With the badger, their cousin to wake.  
They gave him a friendly salute,  
And told him himself to prepare. The otter  
then brought to the room  
A tender, delicious young duck and, handing  
it to him, he said:  
Pray eat; I have it for you, with many a  
spring and a jump, 410  
At the dam by Pimpernel, caught; I hope  
it my cousin will please.

Good hansel is that, I declare, quite cheer-  
fully Reynard replied,  
A something not lightly to scorn. May God,  
of his grace, you repay,  
For thinking so kindly of me. Now him-  
self up to eating he gave,

And drinking quite freely as well; and then,  
with his kinsmen, he went  
To the spot on the unwrinkled sand, where  
they were intended to fight. 416



## CANTO TWELVE.

When eyes upon Reynard he set, as now  
in the ring he appeared,  
With body clean shaven and smooth, and  
over and over bedaubed  
With oil and perfidious fat, with laughter  
the king was convulsed.  
You fox, who that has you taught? he  
exclaimed. With justice, indeed,  
You Reynard, the Fox, may be called; a  
trickster incessant you are.  
Some hole you in all places know, and how  
to make use of it too.

Quite low Reynard bowed to the king, and  
also especially low  
To the queen, who sat by his side; then  
came he, with spirited bounds,  
Inside of the ring, where the wolf, with  
numerous kinsmen and friends,  
His appearance already had made, all  
wishing defeat to the fox;                    10

And many a choleric word, and many a  
menace he heard.

But Lynx and Lupardus at length, who  
kept the arena, brought forth

The sacred mementos, on which now both  
the contestants made oath,

The wolf and the fox, regarding the matter  
which each would maintain.

Isengrim swore, with vehement words and  
threatening looks,

That Reynard a traitor and thief, as well  
as a murderer, was;

Involved in all kinds of misdeeds; in rape  
and adultery caught;

In every matter was false; and life against  
life must be staked.

Then Reynard made oath, at once, in  
return, that nothing he knew

Of one of these infamous crimes; as ever  
did Isengrim lie, 20

And falsely, as usual, swore; but still he  
would never succeed

In passing his falsehoods for truth, at any  
rate, now he would not.

As follows the stewards then spake: Let  
each carry into effect

What now is incumbent on each, and soon  
will the right be revealed.

The big and the little vacated the ring,  
these two, by themselves,

Therein to confine. Then quickly to whisper  
the she-ape began:

To what I have told you attend; forget not  
my counsel to heed.

With cheerfulness, Reynard replied: The  
good exhortation you gave,

More valorous makes me to feel. Rest  
easy, for now I shall not

The tricks or the boldness forget, by which  
I have managed to come 30

From many a peril more dire, into which  
I have often been thrown,

When I this and that have acquired, for  
which nothing yet has been paid,

And boldly my life has been risked. At  
present then why should I not

Come forward the scoundrel to meet? I  
certainly hope to disgrace  
Both him and his genus entire, and honor  
to bring upon mine.  
I him will serve out for his lies. At this,  
they were both of them left  
Together inside of the ring, and the others  
looked eagerly on.

Isengrim wild and ferocious appeared; ex-  
tending his claws,  
Thenceforward he came with forcible springs  
and jaws open wide.  
But Reynard, more active than he, sprang  
off from his furious foe, 40  
And quickly his rough, shaggy tail with his  
aqua fortis he soaked,  
And whisked it about in the dust, in order  
to fill it with sand.  
Now, Isengrim thought, he is mine; in a  
moment the miscreant struck  
Him over the eyes with his tail, when  
vanished both hearing and sight.

This trick was an old one of his; already  
    had many poor chaps  
Given the virulent strength of his aqua  
    fortis a test.

He had blinded so Isengrim's cubs, as in  
    the beginning was told,  
And now he their father would mark.

When he his antagonist's eyes  
Had lathered like this with the stuff, he  
    sprang away sideways and put  
Himself in the wind, then beat up the  
    sand, and much of the dust           50  
Drove into the eyes of the wolf, who,  
    by whisking and rubbing it in  
In his haste, did the worst he could do,  
    and greatly augmented his pain.

On the other hand Reynard contrived, with  
    acumen, his tail to employ;  
He struck his opponent anew, and rendered  
    him thoroughly blind.

It wretchedly went with the wolf, for care  
    took the fox to improve  
The advantage he thus had obtained; and,  
    soon as he came to observe

The bedewed, smarting eyes of his foe, he  
began, with impetuous bounds,  
To assail him with powerful blows, and  
bring into vigorous play  
His nails as well as his teeth, and ever his  
eyes to anoint.  
Half crazed, the wolf scrambled about; then  
him to make game of began 60  
Reynard more boldly, and said: Sir Wolf,  
you have oft, in the past,  
Choked many an innocent lamb; and also,  
in course of your life,  
Gulped many immaculate beasts; I hope  
they'll be able, henceforth,  
The blessings of rest to enjoy; and that  
you may, in any event,  
Be willing to leave them in peace, and  
take benediction for pay.  
A penance like this will be good for your  
soul, and strikingly so,  
If calmly your end you await. This time,  
rest assured, you will not  
From me in escaping succeed; appease me  
you must with your prayers;

Then mercy extend you I will, and see  
that your life is preserved.

Hastily Reynard said this, and had his  
opponent, meanwhile, 70

Steadfastly seized by the throat, expecting  
him thus to subdue;

But Isengrim, stronger than he, then sav-  
agely roused himself up,

And tore himself suddenly free. Now  
Reynard laid hold of his face,

Inflicted a terrible wound, and one of his  
eyes he contrived

Adroitly to pluck from his head; and blood  
ran below from his nose.

Reynard cried out: This pleases me well!  
This means my success!

The wolf to lose courage began; his blood  
and the loss of his eye

Him out of his mind nearly drove; forget-  
ting his pain and his wounds,

Directly on Reynard he sprang, and forced  
him below to the earth.

The fox now began to feel ill, and little  
his wisdom availed, 80  
For one of his foremost paws, which he  
had made use of as hands,  
Isengrim hurriedly seized, and held with his  
teeth like a vice.  
In pain Reynard lay on the ground, and  
fear, at that instant, he felt  
Of losing entirely his hand; and a thousand  
ideas conceived.  
Then Isengrim bellowed these words, in  
a deep and sepulchral voice:

Your hour, you thief, has arrived! Surrender  
you now on the spot,  
Or else you dead I will strike, for all of  
your fraudulent deeds.  
My debt to you now I will pay; to you  
little help has it been,  
The dust to stir up, your bladder to drain,  
your hide to have shaved,  
And body with grease to besmear. Woe  
to you now! you have done 90



Such evil to me with your lies, and ruined  
the sight of my eye;  
But now you shall not get away; surrender,  
or else I will bite.

Thought Reynard at this: I am now in a  
fix, and what can I do?  
If give I not in, he puts me to death; and  
if I give in,  
Dishonor for ever is mine. This punish-  
ment well I deserve,  
For him I too badly have used, too grossly  
offensive have been.  
And then honeyed phrases he tried, in  
order his foe to appease.  
Dear uncle, to him he remarked, I shall,  
with much pleasure, become  
One of your vassals at once, with every-  
thing I possess;  
And gladly will go as a pilgrim for you  
to the sacred tomb, 100  
To the Holy Land, into every church, and  
bring you therefrom

Indulgences plentiful back. The same will  
undoubtedly tend

To the profit and good of your soul; and  
over enough shall be left

For both of your parents, as well, that in  
life everlasting they may

This benefit also enjoy; who does such  
assistance not need?

I honor you much as the pope; and now,  
by the gods, do I swear

A sacred, inviolate oath, that from now till  
futura's end,

I will, with the whole of my kin, be ever  
in bondage to you.

Without intermission we all at your service  
will be. This I swear!

What I to the king would not grant, is now  
freely offered to you. 110

If you my proposal accept, one day shall  
the kingdom be yours.

Then all I am able to catch will I order  
to you to be brought,—

Geese and ducks and poultry and fish,—ere  
I the least part

Of any such food shall consume; to you  
and your children and wife  
Shall the pick of it always be left. I will,  
in addition, with zeal,  
Take care that your life is made safe, no  
evil shall ever you touch.  
I crafty am called, and you have the  
strength, so together we can  
Great deeds, I imagine, perform. If each  
by the other we stand,  
The one with his might, the other with  
skill, who can us subdue?  
If one with the other we fight, it only  
vexation will bring. 120  
This thing I should never have done, if I  
but a decent excuse  
Had known for refusing to fight; you  
challenged, however, and I  
Had nothing to do but accept, if only in  
honor's behalf.  
But courtly myself I have borne and, during  
the course of the strife,  
Not all of my strength have displayed; for  
seemed it to me that it must

To honor most fully redound, my uncle  
forbearance to show.

If hatred to you I had borne, it otherwise  
with you had gone.

Slight are the wounds you've received; and  
if, by unlucky mischance,

The use of your eye is impaired, for that I  
am heartily grieved.

The best of the matter is this: that I a  
restorative know, 130

And if it to you I impart, then thankful  
to me you will feel.

Though even your eye should be gone, yet  
well if you otherwise get,

That always a comfort will be; for, when  
you lie down to your sleep,

One window alone you must close, while we  
shall have double the care.

In order your anger to calm, my relatives  
all, straight away,

Themselves shall before you prostrate; my  
wife and my children, as well,

In the presence, at once, of the king, and in  
this assemblage's sight,

Shall make intercession for me, and beg that  
you will me forgive,  
And let me depart with my life. I then  
will in public avow  
That I have been telling untruths, and done  
you much harm with my lies, 140  
Deceiving you all that I could. And further  
I promise to swear,  
That of you nothing evil I know, and will,  
from the present time on,  
Not injure you, even in thought. Now, how  
could you ever demand  
Any greater atonement from me than what  
I am ready to make?  
If you put me to death, what get you by  
that? There will always remain  
My friends and relations to fear; and then,  
beyond this, bear in mind  
That, should you me spare, you will quit,  
with glory and honor, the field,  
And to all will seem noble and wise; for  
higher is capable none  
Himself to exalt, than when he forgives.  
A chance such as this

Will not again soon to you come. Take it  
up! For the rest, it is now 150  
The same altogether to me, whether I am  
to live or to die.

Hypocrite! answered the wolf, what pleasure  
to you it would be,  
If I should again set you free; but of gold  
if the world were composed,  
And it you should offer to me, now in the  
hour of your need,  
I would not again let you go. Thus oft  
you have taken vain oaths,  
Lying rascal, to me! In truth, not the  
shell of an egg should I get,  
If I were to part with you now. Your  
kinsmen not much do I reckon;  
I am ready for all they can do, and think  
it quite proper that I  
Their enmity thus should acquire. Malevo-  
lent rascal, how would  
You not scoff, if you I let go on these  
protestations you make. 160

Who you did not know would be duped.  
You say you have spared me today,  
You scurvy, detestable thief! And is there  
not one of my eyes  
Now hanging far out of my head? You  
wretch, have you also my skin  
Not damaged in places a score? The  
chance should I ever have had  
Again to recover my breath, if you the  
advantage had gained?  
Most stupidly would it be done if I, for  
this scandal and shame,  
To you grace and pity now showed. You  
traitor, on me and my wife  
You harm and dishonor have brought, and  
now you shall pay with your life.

As the wolf was addressing the fox, in  
some way the rascal contrived  
His paw that was free to ingraft between  
his antagonist's thighs, 170  
And clutch his most sensitive parts, inhu-  
manly rending him there.

But of this nothing more will I say, except  
that the wolf now began  
In a pitiful manner to cry and to howl,  
with his mouth open wide.  
Reynard now swiftly withdrew his paw  
from the close pinching teeth;  
With both he held on to the wolf, with  
ever more tightening grasp,  
And pinched and grappled and pulled, till  
cried the poor fellow so hard,  
That blood he began to throw up. His pain  
was so great that the sweat,  
All over his body, broke out, and terror  
now loosened his bowels.  
The fox was delighted at this; and, hoping  
the contest to win,  
Held on to him now with hands and with  
teeth, till such awful distress, 180  
Such torture, came over the wolf, that he  
gave himself over as lost.  
The blood from his eye ran over his head,  
and he fell in a swoon  
To the ground. The fox, at this moment,  
would not an abundance of gold,



For a sight such as this, have exchanged;  
and thus he continued to hold,  
To drag, and to worry the wolf, that all  
might behold his distress;  
He pulled, he pinched, and he bit, and  
clawed the poor impotent brute,  
Till he with convulsions was seized, and in  
his own filth and the dust,  
He rolled with unearthly howls, in a truly  
unmannerly way.

His friends now lamented aloud, and  
proceeded the king to entreat  
The combat to bring to an end, if so it  
should please him to do. 190  
The king thus replied to their prayer: So  
soon as you all are agreed,  
And it pleases you all that so it shall be,  
then I am content.

The king then gave a command to the  
keepers both of the ring,

Lupardus and Lynx, that they now to the  
two belligerents go.

So within the arena they went, and to  
Reynard, the victor, they said

That now it had gone far enough, and the  
king had expressed a desire

The combat himself to assume, and the  
quarrel see brought to an end.

He wishes that you, they went on, your  
opponent surrender to him,

And now, to your overcome foe, be willing  
his life to accord.

For if in this duel should one, by act of  
the other, be killed, 200

Harm would on both sides be done. The  
advantage you certainly have!

All, little and big, have it seen, and all  
the best men of the state

Accord you support and applause. For ever  
you've won them as friends,

Reynard, with feeling, then said: For this  
I shall thankful be found!

With pleasure I follow the will of the king,  
and that which is fit  
I gladly shall do; I have conquered, and no  
greater honor than that  
Can wish to achieve. But one thing I hope  
the king will permit:  
That counsel I take with my friends. Then  
shouted aloud all the friends  
Of Reynard, each one: It seems to us good  
with the wish of the king,  
At once, to comply; and running they came  
to the victor in crowds; 210  
His relatives all, the badger, the otter, the  
beaver, the ape.  
Now too could be classed the marten and  
weasel as friends of the fox,  
The ermine and squirrel as well, and many  
who bore him ill-will,  
And would not have uttered his name; they  
all of them ran to him now.  
There also appearance put in, those who  
had charged him with crime,  
As if now relations they were; with wives  
and with children they came,

The big and the small and between, and  
even their infants in arms.

They fondled and flattered him all, as if not  
enough could they do.

It ever goes thus in the world. The fortunate  
always are wished

Enjoyment of lasting good health, and  
friends in abundance they find; 220

But he whom misfortune assails, in patience  
his soul must possess.

Just so did it here come to pass; and, next  
to the victor, was each

Himself fully ready to puff. Some played  
on the flute and trombone;

While others were singing with joy, or beating,  
at intervals, drums.

Said Reynard's adherents to him: Rejoice,  
in that you have, today,

Exalted yourself and your race, by what you  
have done in the ring;

Excessively troubled we felt, when it looked  
as if you had succumbed;

But the aspect was speedily changed, and  
splendidly played was the piece.

Reynard remarked: I have won! and tendered his thanks to his friends.

At this their departure they took, with  
plenty of bustle and noise, 230

And Reynard in front of them all, by  
both the ring stewards upheld,

Until they arrived at the throne, where  
Reynard fell down on his knees.

The king bade him get on his feet, and  
said, before all of his lords:

The day you have saved in good style;  
with glory and honor have you

This matter conducted all through, for  
which I acquit you of guilt;

All penalties now are revoked, and about it  
it I fully intend,

In my council of nobles, to speak, on the  
very first day that again

Isengrim's health is restored; the matter is  
closed for today.

Your advice, most gracious of lords, Reynard discreetly replied,  
Is good into practice to put: your knowledge is best in the case. 240  
When hither I came, so many complained;  
they lied to the wolf,  
My resolute foe to oblige, who thought he  
would me overthrow,  
And got me well-nigh in his power; then  
also the others cried out:  
To the cross! and joined in complaint, in  
order to compass my death;  
And all to be pleasing to him, for clearly  
it was to be seen,  
That with you he stood better than I; and  
none had the slightest idea  
Of how it would end; nor where, peradventure,  
the truth might reside.  
To yon dogs I compare them, indeed, the  
which in great numbers were wont  
In front of the kitchen to stand, in hope  
that the goodnatured cook  
Them would remember, perchance, with one  
or two bones now and then. 250

These wide-awake, open-mouthed dogs now  
one of their fellows observed,  
Who managed to steal from the cook a  
portion of meat that was boiled,  
And, haplessly, got not away sufficiently fast  
from the place;  
For the cook, coming on him behind, hot  
water upon him had thrown,  
And badly had scalded his tail. Yet let he  
his booty not fall,  
But mingled himself with the rest, who one  
to another remarked:  
Just notice how him does the cook, above  
all the others, befriend;  
And see what a precious tid-bit he him  
gave! And then he replied:  
You little the bearings perceive; you praise  
and commend me in front,  
Where possibly pleasure you get, by feasting  
your eyes on the meat; 260  
But look at me now from behind; and, if  
you me happy account,  
You soon your opinion will change. They  
fully examined him then, .

And found him so terribly burned, that fast  
coming out was his hair,  
And shrivelled was all of his skin. With  
terror they all were now seized,  
And went to the kitchen no more, but  
bolted and left him alone.  
My lord, it's the greedy I'm aiming at  
here; while mighty they are,  
Quite ready and willing are all, to have  
them as comrades and friends.  
All hours of the day they are bearing off  
meat in their mouths.  
Who does not conform to their ways, will  
for it to suffer be made.  
Our praise they must always receive, how  
badly soever they act, 270  
And thus we encourage their criminal deeds.  
In this way does each  
Who does not reflect on his end. Such  
fellows, however, become  
Very frequently punished, indeed, and their  
power has a sorrowful end.  
No one will bear with them more; and  
thus, to the right and the left,



Falls off from their bodies the hair. Their  
friends of the former days,  
Both little and big, recede from them  
now, and naked them leave,  
As did in a body the dogs, at once their  
companion forsake,  
When they had his injury seen, and noticed  
his badly used half.

Gracious lord, you know very well that none  
can of Reynard so talk.  
For me shall my friends never have any  
reason whatever to blush. 280  
Accept for your favor my thanks, and if  
but I could, at all times,  
Learn with precision your will, I gladly  
would bring it to pass.

Much talking will do us no good, responded  
to Reynard the king;  
To all I attention have paid, and know  
very well what you mean.

You now as a baron I'll have in council  
again as before,  
And make it a duty of yours, at every  
season and hour,  
With my privy council to meet. And thus  
I restore you again  
Completely to honor and power, and this  
you will merit, I hope.  
Help all to be done for the best! I cannot  
you spare from the court.  
And if you take care to combine uprightness  
with wisdom, I trow 290  
That none will you ever surpass, or with  
greater acumen and skill,  
Advice and contrivances plan. I will, in  
the future, complaints  
Not hear about you any more; and ever  
shall you, in my stead,  
As chancellor speak and perform; the seal  
of the empire, as well,  
Committed shall be to your hands, and  
what you may do or indite,  
Shall remain as indited and done. Thus  
fairly has Reynard again

“With manifestations of grief, their friend on a stretcher they laid,  
And carried him out of the ring.”



Himself into favor propelled, and everything  
has to be done

In accord with his counsel and will, be it  
either for evil or good.

In thanking the king, Reynard said: My  
noble commander and prince,

You grant to me honor too great, in mind  
I shall ever it bear, 300

As I hope understanding to keep. That  
clearly by you shall be seen.

What happened meanwhile to the wolf, let  
us briefly endeavor to find.

Defeated he lay in the ring, and treated  
with insult and shame;

His wife and his friends to him went, as  
also did Tybert the cat,

And Bruin the bear, and children and serv-  
ants and all of his kin;

With manifestations of grief, their friend  
on a stretcher they laid—



Which they had well padded with hay, in  
order to furnish him warmth—  
And carried him out of the ring. His  
wounds being seen to, they found  
That he twenty-six had received. A num-  
ber of surgeons arrived,  
Who bandaged him up out of hand, and  
administered curative drugs. 310  
He was crippled in every limb. They  
likewise applied to his ear  
A salve made of herbs, and loudly he  
sneezed both before and behind.  
They, after consulting, resolved to bathe  
him and rub him with oil.  
Such was the way that the wolf was  
cheered by his sorrowing friends;  
They carefully put him to bed, and he  
slept, though not very long,  
But woke in confusion and grief; his shame  
and the pain of his wounds  
Him greatly upset; he lamented aloud and  
seemed in despair.  
Him tenderly Greedimund nursed, though  
bearing a sorrowful heart,

As she of his injuries thought. With  
manifold spasms and pains,  
There stood she and pitied herself, as also  
her children and friends; 320  
Then looked at the suffering man, and  
thought he could never get well;  
He was raving with pain, his anguish was  
great, the sequel was sad.

But Reynard, half crazy with joy, an  
agreeable gossip enjoyed,  
On various things, with his friends; he  
heard his own praises resound,  
And went in high feather from there.  
The gracious and worshipful king  
Sent with him an escort along, and heartily  
said, as he left:  
Come back again soon! The fox on the  
ground then knelt at the throne,  
And said: I give you my cordial thanks,  
and also my lady the queen,  
Your council, and all of the lords. My  
sovereign master, may God

Many honors in store for you keep, and  
what it may be you desire 330  
I gladly shall do; I love you indeed, as in  
duty I'm bound.

At present, if you will permit, I purpose  
to go to my home,  
My wife and dear children to see, who are  
sadly awaiting me there.

Go at once, responded the king, you further  
have nothing to fear.

And Reynard thus took himself off, raised  
higher in favor than all.

Great numbers there are of his kind, who  
practice the very same art;

Red beards do not all of them wear, but  
still are they kept out of sight.

Proudly now Reynard withdrew, with all of  
his race, from the court,

With forty relations, who felt much pleased  
at the honor received.



Reynard stepped forth like a lord, the  
others all marching behind. 340  
He seemed in good spirits just then, his  
brush had much broader become,  
He had, by his luck and success, found  
favor again with the king,  
Was now in the council once more, and  
thought how to put it to use.  
All those whom I love, it shall aid, and  
benefit all of my friends,  
He resolved; more highly is wisdom, by far,  
to be honored than gold.

Thus Reynard betook himself off, attended  
by all of his friends,  
Towards Malepartus his fort, whither now he  
directed his steps.  
Himself he showed thankful to all who  
friendship to him had displayed,  
And who, at the moment of doubt, had  
rallied themselves to his side.  
He offered his services now in return, as  
they parted and went, 350

Each one of them all, to his own; and he,  
when he came to his home,  
Found his wife, dame Ermelyn, well; she  
joyfully welcomed him back,  
About his vexations enquired, and how he  
again had escaped.  
All right, Reynard said, I came off! Once  
more have I managed myself  
Into favor to raise with the king; I shall,  
as in seasons gone by,  
In council again have my place, and this,  
for the whole of our race,  
Will to honor and glory redound. He has,  
as prime minister, me  
Appointed in presence of all, and to me  
has entrusted his seal.  
All Reynard may do or may write, shall  
now and for ever remain  
Exactly as written and done, and well may  
all bear this in mind. 360

A lesson I've taught to the wolf, and not  
many minutes it took,

So he will impeach me no more. Sore  
wounded and blinded he is;  
And dishonored, the whole of his race; my  
mark I upon him have left.  
Small use after this will he be to the  
world. Together we fought,  
And I have come out on the top. I think  
he will hardly again  
Recover his health. What care I for that?  
Above him I am,  
And all of his comrades as well, who with  
him have taken their stand.

His wife was now greatly rejoiced; more  
resolute also became  
Both of his two little boys, at their father's  
promotion and fame.  
With joy to each other they said: Delect-  
able days we shall have, 370  
Respected and honored by all; meanwhile  
we must do what we can,  
Our citadel's strength to increase, and  
cheerful and fearless to live.

High honor has Reynard just now! And  
now unto wisdom let each  
Himself at once turn, all evil avoid, and  
virtue esteem!

This is the sense of the song, in which  
has the poet seen fit

To mingle both fable and fact, that evil  
from good one may learn

To winnow, and wisdom may prize; that  
buyers likewise of this book

May daily instruction receive in the ways  
and affairs of the world.

As in the beginning it was, is now and  
will ever remain.

And thus doth our narrative end of Rey-  
nard the fox and his ways.

The Lord in his mercy us help to glory  
eternal! AMEN.







OCT 25 1899

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